

The Poets
and the Poetry
of the Century

Alfred H. Miles



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The
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Frederick Tennyson
to
Arthur Hugh Clough

Edited by
ALFRED H. MILES

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APPENDIX TO PART I
OF THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

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PREFATORY.

THIS volume covers the poetic period beginning with the Tennyson brothers and continuing to the time of Arthur Hugh Clough—a period distinguished by the poetry of Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning.

The Editor has to acknowledge his obligations to the several members of the Tennyson family and to Mrs. Brotherton for information given, the use of letters, and the correction of data; also for generous permission to select from the poems of Mr. Frederick Tennyson and the late Rev. Charles Tennyson Turner. He has to express his regret, however, that owing to the refusal on the part of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. (to whom he is otherwise largely indebted), to give the necessary permission, he has been unable adequately to represent the Laureate. As Lord Tennyson's poems are easily obtainable in one volume, and are, in their entirety, in the hands of all lovers of poetry, the omission is perhaps less important than might have been the exclusion of many a less accessible if less gifted poet. The Editor would record his gratitude to the late Sir Francis Hastings Doyle and to Professor Blackie, for permission to quote from their poetry, and to Messrs. Macmillan & Co. for the confirmation of their permissions; also to Messrs. Macmillan for permission to

use the latest text of the poems of Arthur Hugh Clough. He is further indebted to Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co. for permission to print a selection from the poems of Archbishop Trench published by them ; to Messrs. Smith & Elder for the use of a number of poems by Robert Browning ; to Lord Houghton for the selection from the late Lord Houghton's works ; to Lady Ferguson for permission to print poems by the late Sir Samuel Ferguson ; to Mr. Alfred Domett for a liberal selection from his father's poetry ; to Professor Minto for the selection from the poetry of the late William Bell Scott ; to Mr. Eric Mackay for a selection from the poetry of his father ; to Mr. W. J. Linton for permission to select from his dainty volume, "Poems and Translations," published by Mr. J. C. Nimmo ; also to Mr. Aubrey de Vere, Dr. T. Gordon Hake, Mr. Philip James Bailey, Mr. John Ruskin, the late Mr. Thomas Westwood, and Mr. W. M. W. Call. He would also express his special thanks to Dr. Furnivall, Mr. Thomas Bayne, Mr. Joseph Knight, Mr. A. H. Bullen, Mr. William Gisborne, Mr. J. Henry Brown, Mr. W. Collingwood, and Dr. Japp for valuable critical help.

A. H. M.

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Frederick Tennyson
to
Arthur Hugh Clough

Frederick Tennyson.

1807.

IN approaching a member of the Tennyson family who has successfully contributed to the poetic literature of our country, the reflection naturally arises that that family is a very exceptional one in its gifts and in the honours it may claim. Like the Brontës and the Roscoes, all the Tennysons are geniuses,—poets, in the purest and highest sense of the word. Had it not been for the very lofty eminence Alfred has attained, both Charles and Frederick would have seemed to stand higher. His mighty fame in a sense overshadows theirs. They appear to be dwarfed as they stand, and cannot help standing, close by the side of him; but that is not because they are insignificant, but because he rises to the proportions of a giant. Proximity and association arising from kindredship have thus sometimes unexpected results. Charles, in some measure, asserted a place of his own, and in the minds of many, and these the best judges, he moves so independently of his great relative that we can view him far enough apart to realise his true height. With Frederick, in some measure, it is different: though borrowing little or nothing from his younger brother, he has, nevertheless, more affinity or likeness to him on a general survey. His choice of themes; his manner of approaching them, turns of rhythm that are quite natural to him, often recall

the music with which we are more familiar. It is not too much to say that, if Alfred Tennyson had not stood so pre-eminent, Frederick Tennyson would have seemed to us more significant and original.

Frederick Tennyson was the second son of this most gifted family, but his elder brother died young. He was born on June 5th, 1807, at Louth. Like his younger brothers, he went to the Louth Grammar School, while still but a child. Their mother was, in fact, a daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche, who had been rector of Louth; and the grandmother and aunt of the boys still kept house in Louth. This house formed a second home for the brothers, which accounts for their having gone from Somersby at so young an age. When a boy of ten, Frederick Tennyson went to Eton, and is declared by Sir Francis Doyle to have been a remarkable boy among his senior contemporaries. "Like most of the Tennysons," Sir Francis goes on, "though full of genius, his genius had a touch of eccentricity about it. Of his poetical talent you could not say that it belonged to anybody but himself; still it seems to me more akin, naturally more akin, to that of the Laureate, in spirit and in form, than the talent of their intermediate brother Charles: the graceful and finished compositions of the latter writer reminding one of no other person in his own family or out of it."

After being for some years at Eton, he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, where, though he studied hard in his own way, he did not work very steadily for honours, though he gained the Bronze Medal for a very fine Greek ode on the pyramids,—“the

last cadence of which," says Sir Francis Doyle, "has stayed in my ears ever since: ὀλλυμέναν γὰρ ὀχθὼν ἐξαπολείται."

Frederick Tennyson for many years lived abroad, and finally married an Italian lady, taking up his residence in the Palazzo Torrigiani at Florence, so that he rather separated himself from England and English literature; in which, had he chosen to work with a steady purpose, he would no doubt have acquired the highest distinction.

In 1859, Mr. Tennyson settled in Jersey, where he produced the volumes of poetry published since. In letters written to one of his most intimate friends,¹ he gives vivid pictures of his surroundings, and of the climatic conditions of that island. Here are some of his impressions, conveyed with great force and picturesqueness:—

"I suppose I must have become acclimatised here, as ten years have rolled by, and upon the whole I feel better than I did in Italy,—though the climate of Jersey is a caricature of England in the capriciousness and rapidity of its changes, the annual range is almost less than that of any country on the globe. Madeira and New Zealand are its rivals in that respect. . . . The morning of the 26th (Jan. 1870) with us was worse than anything I ever remember in any land. Imagine a hurricane blowing—clouds of dense white powder, like pounded sugar, whirling and oscillating furiously in vast sheets, blotting out all

¹ Mrs. Brotherton, who made his acquaintance when a girl of fifteen, has corresponded with him for over forty years, and has, with his permission, kindly set certain of his letters to her at our disposal for the purposes of this notice. In sending these letters, she writes:—"His tender heart, and noble and beautiful mind, make his friendship and himself so precious to me that the thought of his advanced age is one I dare not dwell on."

distance, with oceanic accompaniments from the unseen behind—the awful voice of many waters hymning with tragic enthusiasm as it were a dreadful and final world desolation. Windows blocked up with frozen snow, greenhouses darkened, and in the town masses of sooty coldness flopping down into the streets within an inch of your head. Imagine all this, and then imagine, if you can, a week later—the earth free, and the heavens laughing with a vernal warmth and splendour; the sea opal-tinted, and the wind soft and genial. Such is Jersey—the very motley of geography. About a year ago, my old friend, the Gulf-stream, was impeached as a humbug by some would-be philosopher, or malignant practical joker—like Mr. Saxby² of tidal-wave celebrity; but I am happy to say the grand old Serpent's honour and glory have been re-established on incontrovertible evidence by a sea-captain. I speak of the Gulf-stream, for it is to this we are indebted for our genial winter temperature in these islands, and if it were to cease to exist, the climate of Great Britain would be greatly changed for the worse. Long life then to the great old Serpent, whose tail is here and whose head is in the Gulf of Mexico."

In 1854 he published a volume entitled "*Days and Hours*," marked, not only by great variety of subject, but saturated with dreamy music and fine imaginative impression. The poems titled "*A Bird of Dawn*" and "*The Skylark*," to our thinking, reach a very high standard indeed, with here and there turns and phrases which are full of colour and light; graceful, original in the highest sense, and suggestive. "*The Three Brothers*," in a different way, exhibits the true poetic inspiration; and "*The Harvest Home*" and "*The Thirty-first of May*" are redolent of the spirit of nature, and the magic of fancy, which touches nature's features with a fantastic light and colouring.

² The successor of Admiral Fitzroy at the Meteorological Office.

In 1890 Mr. Hallam Tennyson put through the press a poem of Frederick Tennyson's of a more ambitious character, "The Isles of Greece," in which the burning Sappho has her place of power, and many of the types of Greek mythology confess themselves. Passages in this poem are masterly, marked by imaginative impulse, and in point of metre show the utmost originality of movement and command of artistic resources. Especially were we struck with the passage which begins, "Like Summer Birds," down to the end, "Thou shalt hear" (pp. 101-103). The earlier part of the "Apollo," the V. section of "Anaktoria," and the V. in "The Return" on old age; and several other passages in that part, noble, pathetic, full of imaginative suggestion. Here, for instance, is a fine thought boldly expressed from "Apollo":—

" But if one should come
In sober stole, a master of those thoughts
That carry on the world, and shake us still
With echoes only; one whose lonely heart
In ages gone was stirred with such a pulse
That all the Present trembles to it still: "

If criticisms might be made on the tendency here and there to dwell on the same note through too wide a sweep of verse, and to put into the mouth of Sappho and the rest too spiritualised sentiments, and thoughts which are too modern and involved, this, in our idea, is amply compensated by the unexpected felicities of metre and phrase, and the quick, penetrating glances into the secrets and springs of life that lie beyond the material and sensible. To lovers of poetry this work, indeed, only requires to be made known to ensure its wide acceptance, as something approaching to the adequate

expression of a genius which has been only too reserved and careful not to weaken its claims by too frequent appeals to the public.

Whatever criticisms might be made upon the work, it certainly was not the result of "raw haste." Mr. Tennyson has been at work on it for more than five and twenty years. He printed the bulk of it in Jersey in 1870; not for publication, but merely that he might see the poems more clearly, judge and correct them better; but the progress of the Jersey press was about one sheet in six weeks. However he persevered, because, even if manuscripts were legible, it was risky to trust them to the tender mercies of the most orderly post office system.

"I am sure," he proceeds, "I could not perform such a feat as I know Alfred to have done any more than raise the dead. The earliest manuscript of the "Poems chiefly Lyrical" he lost out of his greatcoat pocket one night while returning from a neighbouring market town. This was enough to reduce an ordinary man to despair, but the invisible ink was made to reappear—all the thoughts and fancies in their orderly series, and with their entire drapery of words arose and lived again. Such is the true poet. 'Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.' I wonder what, under such circumstances, would become of the 'Mob of gentlemen who write with ease.' Of course it would not much matter as they could easily indite something new."

This passage we give as conveying an interesting fact with regard to a precious volume, of which we were not aware till we read this letter.

The "Isles of Greece" volume, published by Macmillan in the end of 1890, was printed from the Jersey printed copies, which had been sent by him to Mrs. Brotherton twenty years before.

On July 11th, 1870, we find him, after having

described his plans in general terms to the same effect as in the preface to the volume itself, writing thus;—

“I shall never accomplish it, and if I do, never be satisfied with it. . . . It may be said I have tampered with, and most audaciously disfigured the noble old Greek Legends. This I do not deny. But, then, what are these noble old legends?—the merest fables. If the Greeks themselves have played old gooseberry with their own stories, am I to blame for making a similar use of their handiwork? Who knows if mine be not the more authentic version? It is notorious that in mythological matters they have invariably incarnated in fantastical forms and thoroughly materialised the primitive Verities which descended from Ages far behind the Historical Period. The Greeks got hold of these traditions, and used or abused them *ad libitum*; and if they behold me from their abodes beyond the Great River, they must be aware that I am only following their example. So you see I have taken what I have taken from the Hellenic Legends, merely to serve as a framework to as much extraneous matter as can safely be introduced without damaging all verisimilitude irreparably. . . . I felt that this old framework would admirably serve my purpose, leaving me ample space for the Marvellous, and the Colossal, and the Impassioned. I believe the world is dreadfully sick of all old things (forgetting that the oldest things are sometimes the newest), and more inclined to favour Browning’s matters and metres than all the writings of Sappho, Alcæus, Erinna, and Telesilla, (a Greek poetess who flourished about 510 B.C.) . . . Æson is intended to be exhaustive (I fear it may be only exhausting) of the consecutive states in the life of a sensitive and thoughtful Pagan who all his life long was held in bondage from fear of death; not, however, without passing glimpses of the progression into a higher state. You know he was supposed to have been restored to youth by the Sorceress Medcia. The rejuvenescence, including the regrets and apprehensions which would in all probability be the fate of any rational and sensitive being who might actually realise it, I have attributed to the influence of Hasheesh, which Jason in his voyages procures from the

East. That such effects are not exaggerated is proved by the experience of Hasheesh-eaters, to whom Space and Time disappear, a moment expands into Ages, a small place dilates into the Immeasurable. I have no doubt that the drug itself, the extract of Indian Hemp (*Cannabis Indica*) is older than any historical period. That it was known to Pythagoras, and accounts for many of his peculiarities—that the tribe of the so-called Assassins in Arabia were so called from their habit of dosing themselves with Hash-hash, and placing themselves for the time being in an imaginary Paradise. Not that they had the command of the drug, but their chief supplied them with it, and thus bound them to his allegiance even unto death, for it is said that they all would have given their lives for him. It is far more powerful than opium, and, unless abused, does not leave in the system the evil effects of the latter.”

But the volume published in 1890 contains only a portion of the whole scheme ; and on this account, we find him writing some time after :—

“ I have received from Macmillan all the poems which he had by him—and, would you believe it ? My past four-score memory is so treacherous that I had actually forgotten that I had written three of them, viz.—Daphne, Psyche, and Hesperia ; and their arrival took me as much by surprise as if they had been the composition of another writer, and the perusal of them was nearly as fresh to me. . . . Not long since my daughter Emily (Mrs. Ford) had the courage to pay a visit to the great Gladstone at Hawarden Castle, announcing herself the daughter of an old schoolfellow of his. She declared that he was most amiable ; said he recollected me perfectly well at Eton, and told her that he had read ‘ Days and Hours,’ and had never forgotten ‘ the exquisite beauty of the poems.’ Browning and his wife—that dear little woman—gave the same verdict many years ago when we were all together at Florence. . . . The more I think of it, the more absurd it seems that I should at my age be entering the literary lists, as though I were suddenly possessed of a feeling of rivalry of my brother. But God knows at my age I have long ceased to feel anything in the shape of worldly ambition, or love of glory ; and the more

I think of it the more I am convinced that the great lights of the world — your Homers, Dantes, Shakespeares, Raffaelles, Mozarts, etc., have no desire for that retrocedent immortality of a great name left behind. Whatever they might have felt while on earth, they would not now give a crooked sixpence for it."

In the autumn of 1891, "*Daphne and other Poems*" appeared, containing *Æson* and the poems referred to in the above letter. This volume is marked by the same qualities as its predecessor—deep thought, fine phantasy and picturesque colour,—though in pathetic suggestion, richness of rhythm, and pictorial wealth, most critics will perhaps allow that it even surpasses the former one; though some may, indeed, urge as a qualification that modern thought and Christian ideas are too insistent in it, and point in proof to the section of "*Psyche*," in which a few pages are paraphrased from so prosaic a source as Swedenborg's "*Conjugal Love*." But the poetic effect in most cases is enhanced. It is as though the forms of the old Greek myths were but as a transparency, through which may stream the later lights of civilisation and religion without sense of discord, nay, with some fine suggestion of deeper harmony, higher unity. Let the reader turn to "*Niobe*," and read it with care; and we cannot but think that her vision of Christ, and the fading assembly of the Olympian gods, lapsing into crownless skeletons, will so impress him as it did us; while for pathos, surely old *Æson's* experiences of the second age absorbing the first age, as two long perspectives grow to one, is a strikingly fine illustration of the sympathetic imagination. For glow of colour and wealth of fancy few efforts are finer than the description of the wall-pictures in the

palace in "Atlantis." "Hesperia" and "King Athamas" (the last) are marked by fine thought. "Halcyone" and "Psyche" are full of fancy, and "Ariadne," "Pygmalion," and "Daphne" are fulfilled of loveliness and of touches that declare the poet. Fine lines and similes and phrases abound. Here are two:—

"Take counsel: better 'tis to walk with hope
Through starless night, than through midnight with fear."
And again:—

"We spoke together in those tones
That trembling met in one another's hearts,
As sun-smit undulations in mid-sea
Kiss, and are joined at once in perfect peace."

A short passage from "Atlantis" describing the regal banquet-chamber may here also be quoted:—

"All I beheld
Showed me the might and magistracy of men,
The vanished ancestors of those I saw.
The sculptures set in niche or pedestal;
The pictured phantasies along the walls;
The wreathen scroll-work on the roof, afire
With rainbow colours, and the writhen gold
Of the tall urns and jewell'd chalices;
The musical sweet voices of the singers,
Who sang the songs of ages that had reap'd
The harvest of all good things long ago;
The unknown instruments, of gracious mould,
For wind or string; all round me made me feel
Like some hoar patriarch of an hundred years,
Whose soul is dark to all beyond the day,
When for a moment memory glances forth,
Like a last glory from the setting sun
Firing the peaks of snow, and shows him deeds
Done in the warlike prowess of his youth;
He starts, and weeps, and wonders at himself,
And sighs that all is fled for ever by,
All but his weary frame and vain regrets.

And when the cupbearers with silent grace
Bore round in graven ewers the bright blood
Of island vintages, long hid away
In sunless grotts, until the prisoned fires,
As 'twere rejoicing in their freedom, leapt
Out of long years of darkness into day,
And gave the sun back all its stolen gold,
Methought the fragrance of the amber drops
And purple, rose up in my sense, like steam
Of orient mists shot through with sparks of dawn
Innumerable, and through my heart and brain
Wandered sweet phantoms, born of the delight
Of that old wine, breathing of paradises,
And the first world of loving hearts and free."

Though personally on the best of terms with Browning, Mr. Tennyson's love of musical form, and his aversion to anything savouring of sensational narrative, however cunningly manipulated, led him to retreat even from the reading of certain of Browning's works. Here are his confessions on that head :—

"What you say of Browning's 'Ring and the Book,' I have no doubt is strictly applicable, however startling. I confess, however, that I have never had the courage to read the book. He is a great friend of mine, and called upon us here on his way to Dinard in France two years ago—passed a musical evening with us; his son Penini³ playing admirably on the pianoforte, and was altogether very pleasant. But it does not follow that I should put up with absolute horrors, and unrhythmical composition. What has come upon the world that it should take any metrical (?) arrangement of facts for holy Poesy? It has been my weakness to believe that the Fine Arts and Imaginative Literature should do something more than astonish us by *tours de force*; black and white contrasted; outrageous inhumanities, or anything criminally sensational, or merely intellectually potent. As you say a good

³ For the origin of this name see Mrs. Sutherland Orr's "Life of Robert Browning."

heart is better than a clever head, so I say better a page of feeling than a volume of spasms. Spasms, I fear, is the order of the day. The late Lord Robertson, a legal celebrity at Edinburgh, pleading on behalf of someone, said with his serious face which was more tickling than the happiest efforts of Pantaloon: 'We are bound to respect his feelings as a man and a butcher.' Here the man and the butcher are bound up in one. Now in Browning's case I separate the Man from the Butcher. I have nothing to say to him in his blue apron and steel by his side, but, if I meet him in plain clothes, I honour him as a gentleman."

Mr. Tennyson evidently owes much to music in the moulding of his verse, and he is passionately fond of it. When over eighty, Mrs. Brotherton tells us, he improvised on his harmonium. Here is a passage from a letter in which he mentions that he had been much depressed, almost prostrate, and had had recourse to his old restorative—some of the grand old music on the harmonium—and then he proceeds:—

"After all Music is the Queen of the Arts. What are all the miserable concrete forms into which we endeavour to throw 'thoughts too deep for tears,' or too rapturous for mortal mirth, compared with this divine abstract—the oceanic utterances of that voice which can multiply a thousandfold, and exhaust in infinite echoes the passions that on canvas, in marble, or even in Poesy—the composite style in æsthetics—so often leave us cold and motionless? I believe music to be as far above the other Arts—as the inarticulate affections of the Soul are above the rarest ingenuity of the perfect orator. . . . The common charge brought against her by her sisters among the Pierides—and by the transcendental and philosophical critics—is that she has no Type, like the other Arts, on which to model her creations, and to regulate her inspirations. I say her inexhaustible spring is the Soul itself, and its fiery inmost—this chamber illuminated from the centre itself of Being—as the finest and most subtle ethers are begotten of, and flow nearest to the sun."

In the following little extract we have a very original view of sudden accidental death, sufficient to modify the sense of much of the associated horrors :—

“Of course you heard of the loss of the *Normandy* with her crew. These are among the circumstances of our life the most shocking and disheartening ; for a moment leading us to question the existence of an overruling Providence. Shipwrecks, railway accidents, though no worse than pestilences and famines, are more sensational. To be roused from pleasant dreams on a winter’s morning of darkness aggravated by fog, to meet Death at five minutes’ notice, is inconceivably shocking to the natural man. Death itself, under such circumstances, is nothing to its accompaniments ; but could we quiet our nerves and fold our arms, and let the wild waves have their way after the first shock of a moment, all the rest is known to be indescribably delightful. The same is true of hanging ! at any rate, so says Dr. Randolph of America.”

In these letters, indeed, almost all kinds of topics are touched on ; politics and science as well as poetry, literature, and religious questions and matters of personal experience. Here, for instance, in the shape of a criticism on “Gareth and Lynette,” penned shortly after the laureate’s volume bearing that title appeared, is a specimen of the lighter vein by which more serious, or, it may even be, more intimate and spiritual matters, are relieved :—

“I have been reading ‘Gareth and Lynette’ with great delight. It seems to me one of his best productions. It is impregnated with the true heroic atmosphere, and decorated with the delicate carved-work of his peculiar fancy—with dramatic and melodramatic power—though in these poems there is too much of hard knocking to please me. However, I don’t deny that blood and bone is the ‘blood and bone’ of these heroic times, without which the picture would lack some of its foreground reds. ‘Mrs. Harris’ had an article the other day on Alfred. She endeavoured to show that

he could not rank with Homer, Milton, etc., having never discovered a subject capable of expansion into one grand whole. She might as well charge Shakespeare with not being a great poet because his plays are comparatively brief! One always thinks that one perceives in her some paltry attack on a man because of his real or supposed politics. Everything is seen through the green spectacles of partisanship. A Minister might be Solomon in person—Poets and Philosophers might be respectively Newtons and Shakespeares. But if Genius and Wisdom are not of the true party complexion, so much the worse for Wisdom and Genius. . . . It is almost impossible to believe that 'Mrs. Harris' is ever telling the sincere truth. She is a perfect illustration of human nature in general. . . . She ought to be ashamed of herself!"

The "hard knocking" which occurs in the earlier portion of the extract, of course, refers to the large space which is occupied in the "Idylls," not only with "tilt and tournament," but with earnest fighting and bloodshed; but, without this the spirit of these knightly times could hardly be expressed truthfully or adequately. The expression, however, is very characteristic of the writer.

His remembrance of old incidents are often brought in very effectively in these letters, with touches the most novel and impressive and pathetic. There was an alarm of fire at Farringford some years ago, and he writes thus in reference to it:—

"The accident at Farringford shows how almost perfectly helpless are people residing in the country, if fire, from any cause whatsoever, spreads in a house. If the fire in the chimney had extended to the neighbouring parts, in all probability nothing could have saved the house and its contents. My aunt Mary's house in Lincolnshire, a charming place, was destroyed in this manner. In expectation of my cousin, George D'Eyncourt (deceased a few years since), they lighted a fire in his bedroom, and a

beam, which, by some mismanagement abutted on the chimney, took fire, and the whole building was burnt down in a short time, and on a snowy night. Years afterwards I visited the locality, where I and Charles and Alfred, enthusiastic children, used to play at being emperors of China, etc., each appropriating a portion of the old echoing gardens as our domain, and making them reverberate our tones of authority. Those were such days as never can return, when the delighted heart of boyhood inexperienced in sorrows and disappointments anticipates the spiritual conditions of life—and sees that which it desires to see in pure imagination. Similarly in the life to come, but in a degree proportioned to that exalted state of being, what we desire to see will be seen. The poet, who, to use the beautiful language of Bacon, 'submits the shows of this world to the desires of the mind,' will in the next see round about him realised more clearly than any earthly nature, the mountains and valleys, palaces and paradises, or even all the lovely things he has dreamt of here! Think of that! I say, I visited that arena of our childish sports, and never shall forget the pathos of that scene. The gardens clothed with weeds; a few old withered apple-trees in the orchard; the remnants of a pump in the courtyard, and a blackened hearthstone—and silence. But I heard our young voices, and the waving of the old trees no longer there. It is on such occasions we first become aware of our mortality, and of the shadowiness and unsubstantiality of this life, and of its being nothing more than an image of the real life to be. Excuse these memories, I am apt, perhaps, to lapse into this groove oftener than I ought."

Of course, old age and its experiences are often spoken of in the later letters, sometimes with the most touching contrasts. Here is a characteristic passage from a letter dated May 20th, 1890:—

"I have had recently for several consecutive days some very strange experiences. One morning I awoke, and seemed to have lost my natural memory. Objects daily presented to me for years seemed no longer familiar as of old, but, as when a man, after years of travel returns to his

home, and the chamber he formerly occupied takes some time and labour of thought to bring back to his recollection the whereabouts of objects once, as it were, instinctively known to him. I had the same difficulty in recovering some relations to my own surroundings; and this for days was supplemented by a strange sense of having been far away, and conversant with wonderful things, movements, and tumults, which only immeasurable distance deadened to my perception, like great music borne away by the wind. Ever and anon there flashed up within me what I can only describe symbolically as Iridescences of feeling, as when the prismatic colours of a rainbow succeed one another, or the coloured lights in pyrotechnics cause objects in midnight darkness to assume their own hues. But all this, wonderful as it may seem, was not the only change. . . . Never have I felt towards those around me such tender inclinations—such earnest desire to do them all possible good, regardless of self-interest—such a spirit of forgiveness of any wrongs; and my earnest prayerful thankfulness for such inestimable benefits has been invariably acknowledged by that Voice from the Lord Himself, by which He has repeatedly ratified to my spiritual ear His promise of blessing and the continuation thereof.” . . .

This is an extract from a letter written to Mrs. Brotherton in April, 1891.

“‘The Four Travellers,’ I am afraid, will have to remain a fragment, though I have often contemplated the possibility of completing it; but an old man of my great age is already dead—old age being the only death; and the faculties which I once possessed receive no impulse as of old, for activity—no joyous inspiration. The intellect is cold and frozen like the mountain streams in winter—a moonless midnight; and were it not for the increasing illumination of the immortal spirit, which already beholds the dawn of a greater day beyond the mountains, I should indeed be desolate, lost! for I am eighty-four years old next June—and in looking back through my long life, it often seems to me like a dream—many movements, intellectual and physical, seem to me like impossibilities. When I see my little grandson Charlie skipping, and hear him shouting and singing, and the light-limbed and light-hearted girls darting like living lightning down the staircase—which, if

I were to attempt to imitate, I certainly should break my neck,—I say to myself, Is it possible that I can ever have been like them? Alas! for old age; but there are other things sadder than physical disabilities. What can be more mournful than a retrospect of the days of childhood, when I looked up to many who have died at half my present age, as ‘grave and reverend seniors’—Old Time seeming to invert the relation of Past and Present, making the aged young and the young aged—and, oh! what can be so sad as to know that if I have wronged any of the departed by word or deed, redress is no longer possible—the yearning of the heart for reconciliation not to be satisfied; for they are silent. These tender reflexes of the past are in my case intensified by countless little memorial pictures which frequently present themselves unbidden with all the lights and shades and tones of voice of the actual realities—some dating as far back as eighty years at least. Many, I doubt not, experience the same; but my memory is a gallery of pictures of the remote past, while the nearer my life approaches the present, the more leaky become my recollections of once familiar names and more daily intercourse of more recent friends.

“The spring has come again, the leaves are unfolding, the birds are singing, the sun is shining, and surely, next to the human countenance, this is the most lovely emblem, the most beautiful representative material of inner spiritualities and the resurrection, and ought to have been so regarded since the dawn of Christianity, for as sure as winter blossoms into summer, the winter of old age will spring into the Eternal Life. Fear not: hope all things! What a contrast to these consoling aspirations is presented in the touching fragment of the old Greek poet Moschus, which no doubt expresses the scepticism of the ancient world. I give a free translation:—

“‘Aye, aye the garden mallows, mint and thyme,
When they have withered in the winter clime,
After a little space do reappear,
And live again and see another year;
But we, the brave, the noble, and the wise,
When once for all pale Death hath closed our eyes,
Sink into dread oblivion, dark and deep—
The everlasting, never-waking sleep.’”

From such confessions and self-revealings, never meant to be read by other eyes than those of the lady to whom they were addressed, we can learn better, probably, than from aught else the character of the man; and we have been glad of the privilege allowed us to give these extracts from Mr. Tennyson's letters, as we feel convinced they will, in this case, throw the most welcome lights on the spirit and intention animating the poetry.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

POEMS.

FREDERICK TENNYSON.

I.—THE SKYLARK AND THE POET.

HOW the blythe Lark runs up the golden stair
That leans thro' cloudy gates from Heaven to Earth,
And all alone in the empyreal air
Fills it with jubilant sweet songs of mirth ;
How far he seems, how far
With the light upon his wings,
Is it a bird, or star
That shines, and sings ?

What matter if the days be dark and frore,
That sunbeam tells of other days to be,
And singing in the light that floods him o'er
In joy he overtakes Futurity ;
Under cloud-arches vast
He peeps, and sees behind
Great Summer coming fast
Adown the wind !

And now he dives into a rainbow's rivers,
In streams of gold and purple he is drown'd
Shrilly the arrows of his song he shivers
As tho' the stormy drops were turn'd to sound
And now he issues thro',
He scales a cloudy tower,
Faintly, like falling dew
His fast notes shower,

Let every wind be hush'd, that I may hear
The wondrous things he tells the World below,
Things that we dream of he is watching near,
Hopes that we never dream'd he would bestow
Alas ! the storm hath roll'd
Back the gold gates again,
Or surely he had told
All Heaven to men !

So the victorious Poet sings alone,
And fills with light his solitary home,
And thro' that glory sees new worlds foreshown,
And hears high songs, and triumphs yet to come ;
He waves the air of Time
With thrills of golden chords,
And makes the world to climb
On linked words.

What if his hair be gray, his eyes be dim,
If wealth forsake him, and if friends be cold,
Wonder unbars her thousand gates to him,
Truth never fails, nor Beauty waxeth old ;
More than he tells his eyes
Behold, his spirit hears,
Of grief, and joy, and sighs
'Twixt joy and tears.

Blest is the man who with the sound of song
Can charm away the heartache, and forget
The frost of Penury, and the stings of Wrong,
And drown the fatal whisper of Regret !
Darker are the abodes
Of Kings, tho' his be poor,
While Fancies, like the Gods,
Pass thro' his door.

Singing thou scalest Heaven upon thy wings,
Thou liftest a glad heart into the skies ;
He maketh his own sunrise, while he sings,
And turns the dusty Earth to Paradise ;
I see thee sail along
Far up the sunny streams,
Unseen, I hear his song,
I see his dreams.

II.—TO APRIL.

APRIL, April, child of Mirth
And Sorrow, sweetest face on earth,
Oh ! but to name thee fills mine ears
With songs, mine eyes with pleasant tears ;
For so thou wert when I was young,
And call'd thee with a lisping tongue,
So wilt thou be when I am old,
And Loves and Fears alike are cold.

Though others change, thou wilt not change ;
But alway something swift and strange
Like shadows follow'd by the sun
From thee across my heart shall run ;
While the tender breath from thee
Sheds life o'er turf and forest tree,
Pours lovenotes thro' the valleys lone,
And brings me back the swallow flown.

To pale sad Grief thy presence seems
A shape of light in mist of dreams ;
Thou singest into the ears of Joy,
He shakes his locks, the enchanted boy ;

And the clouds soar up, and pile
The Vast with silver hill and isle,
Or under golden arches run
Great rivers pouring from the Sun !

Oft as I mark thee stepping thro'
The mist, thy fair hair strung with dew,
Or by the great stair of the Dawn
Come down o'er river, croft, and lawn,
Thy sun and cloud-inwoven vest
Rippling its skirts from East to West,
And glancing on the breeze and light
Dash the wild flowers left and right.

Oft as in moments soft and fair
Under the clear and windless air
Thou sleepest, and thy breathings low
In blissful odours come and go ;
Oft as in moments proud and wild
Thou spoilest, like a froward child,
The blossoms thou hast just laid on,
And laughest when the ill is done.

Oft as I see thee run and leap
From gusty peaks—or stand and weep
Tears, like Memory's, that distil
Hopes of Good thro' days of Ill ;
And the peaceful rainbow hides
The thunders on the mountain-sides
With its banner, or in the vale
Robes in rich light the poplars pale.

While thy mavis, blythe and boon,
Cheers the morn and afternoon
With happy melodies, that seem
To turn to sound the sunny beam ;

Or the nightingale apart,
Flashes from his human heart
Like earthborn lightning, ceaselessly,
Anguish, Hope, and Victory !

In southern isles, where thro' balm shades,
The moonlight glides o'er colonnades
Of marble—and the waters gush
In tuneful tears amid the hush
Of budding bowers, that silently
Slope thro' pale glory to the sea,
And in the calm and midnight dim
Seem listening to that threefold hymn.

April, April, child of Mirth
And Sorrow, sweetest face on earth,
Oh ! had I such bright notes to make
The wildwoods listen for thy sake ;
Oh ! had I spells to make my pains
My glory, like thy sun-lit rains,
My days a rainbow's arch, to climb
Far off from tears, and clouds of Time !

III.—HARVEST HOME.

COME, let us mount the breezy down,
And hearken to the tumult blown
Up from the champaign and the town

Lovely lights, smooth shadows sweet
Swiftly o'er croft and valley fleet,
And flood and hamlet at our feet ;

Its groves, its hall, its grange that stood
When Bess was Queen, its steeple rude,
Its mill that patters in the wood ;

And follow where the brooklet curls,
Seaward, or in cool shadow whirls,
Or silvery o'er its cresses purls ;

The harvest days are come again,
The vales are surging with the grain ;
The merry work goes on amain ;

Pale streaks of cloud scarce veil the blue,
Against the golden harvest hue
The Autumn trees look fresh and new ;

Wrinkled brows relax with glee,
And aged eyes they laugh to see
The sickles follow o'er the lea ;

I see the little kerchief'd maid
With dimpling cheek, and boddice staid,
'Mid the stout striplings half afraid ;

Her red lip, and her soft blue eye
Mate the poppy's crimson dye,
And the cornflower waving by ;

I see the sire with bronzed chest ;
Mad babes amid the blithe unrest
Seem leaping from the mother's breast :

The mighty youth, and supple child
Go forth, the yellow sheaves are piled,
The toil is mirth, the mirth is wild !

Old head, and sunny forehead peers
O'er the warm sea, or disappears
Drowned amid the waving cars ;

Barefoot urchins run, and hide
In hollows 'twixt the corn, or glide
Towards the tall sheaf's sunny side ;

Lusty Pleasures, hobnail'd Fun
Throng into the noonday sun,
And 'mid the merry reapers run.

Draw the clear October out,
Another, and another bout,
Then back to labour with a shout !

The banded sheaves stand orderly
Against the purple Autumn sky,
Like armies of Prosperity.

Hark ! through the middle of the town,
From the sunny slopes run down
Bawling boys, and reapers brown ;

Laughter flies from door to door
To see fat Plenty with his store
Led a captive by the poor ;

Fetter'd in a golden chain,
Rolling in a burly wain,
Over valley, mount, and plain ;

Right through the middle of the town,
With a great sheaf for a crown,
Onward he reels a happy clown ;

Faintly cheers the tailor thin,
And the smith with sooty chin
Lends his hammer to the din ;

And the master, blythe and boon,
Pours forth his boys that afternoon,
And locks his desk an hour too soon.

Yet when the shadows eastward seem
O'er the smooth-shorn fallows lean,
And Silence sits where they have been,

Amid the gleaners I will stay,
While the shout and roundelay
Faint off, and daylight dies away ;

Dies away, and leaves me lone
With dim ghosts of years ago,
Summers parted, glories flown ;

Till day beneath the West is roll'd,
Till gray spire, and tufted wold
Purple in the evening gold :

Memories, when old age is come,
Are stray ears that fleck the gloom,
And echoes of the Harvest-home.

IV.—LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

TWO Sisters in a honeysuckle shade,
Sat singing the same song—each slender waist
Was by the other's loving arm embraced,
Their mingled hearts the selfsame motion made ;
Their downy cheeks against each other leaning,
Each on the other warmer ruby laid ;
Their clustering locks, the same gold lustre sheening,
Rain'd o'er their necks from many a loosed braid.

They sang of mirth perennial as the clime
Afar, where all the year is Summer weather ;
Of fortunes shared, misfortunes wept together ;
Of constancy inflexible as Time ;
Of unborn daughters wed to unborn heirs ;
Their love begun in childhood never ending ;
And bright-hair'd, blue-eyed beauty such as theirs,
Thro' the unnumber'd generations blending.

Their blessed voices made such deep accord
That twin seem'd one—alas! that very morn
Truth changed to Slander, Love was shrunk to Scorn;
And they were sunder'd by an idle Lord :
A jealous Fury sow'd their hearts with sighs ;
No more they sate, or walk'd, or sang together ;
Their very beauty died within their eyes,
Like timeless blossoms which the frost winds wither !

Two angry striplings—each a burning son
And heir of Vengeance, at a banquet sate,
And pouring hot wine on their ancient hate,
Rail'd at each other, as their sires had done ;
And from amid the appalled guests they stood,
With hands that lighten'd steel, and eyes of flame,
Till lips grew pale for fear their stormy blood
With fiercer drops should put the wine to shame !

“Hold back,” they cried, “were not our fathers' foes,
And theirs before them? how shall we be friends?
To us the heritage of Hate descends,
Life born to strife, and war unto its close.”
Two sisters came, and drew those foes apart—
Each bound her brother's foe with her own charms,
Each to the fetters link'd her brother's heart,
And waged his battle with enchanted arms !

Again two pledged their faith to one another—
“We will be friends,” they said, “while life endures,
“In wealth or penury, or amid the lures
Of Syren tongues—for each shall have a brother
Whose voice shall win him from the subtlest spell
Of all their song:” they said, and swore an oath—
Vain armour for true hearts that loved so well—
But Love and Fate look'd down, and laugh'd at both !

And lo ! a damsel with a scornful brow
Lean'd from a lattice, as they pass'd beneath ;
That day they were forsworn—their mutual breath
Was cursing, till one laid the other low ;
Yet neither did possess her, for she died
Loving a third, but never was his mate :
Grave on their sepulchres, Love, Hate, and Pride—
Blind Nature, and unconquerable Fate !

V.—THE THREE BROTHERS.

I NTO his gorgeous halls the Painter led
The Poet with his volume in his hand ;
He said—"All these have I accomplished,
In form and hue like very Gods they stand :
And Death and Fate I vanquish, if I please,
With shadows, and mine only foe is Time ;
Can any come in glory like to these
Out of thy dim and melancholy clime ?"

In twilight sanctuaries there were seen
Shapes more than Man, the Mighty that had been ;
Wonder and love flow'd round them like a psalm
Lock'd in eternal strife, or throned in calm :
Giants of marble, Demigods and Kings,
Who with their names, like overshadowing wings,
Darken the Earth's faint light, and little span ;
Whose deathless beauty mocks their maker Man.

The rapturous Musician bade unbind
The spirit that obey'd him when he will'd,
And blisses sweet as odor, fleet as wind,
Pass'd from him, and the solemn dome was fill'd ;
He breathed enchanted breath that o'er the sense
Trembled, like fiery light on crisped streams,
And lull'd the painful soul, and bore it hence
Into a land of moonlight and of dreams.

Evening came down, and darkness closed around
Those shapes, and silence swallow'd up that sound ;
But He his magic volume did unroll,
And show'd the threefold image of his soul ;
He show'd them fix'd therein the fluttering thought
That Music scatters, into substance brought,
And godlike moments, which the Painters strive
To bind with fetters, moving and alive.

VI.—LOVE AND THE POET.

THE thunder roll'd o'er land and sea,
The storm howl'd over rock and river,
"The Past hath been, and shall not be,
For ever, and for ever !"
Blue lightnings streaming over deserts vast
Glimmer on flying phantoms dimly shown,
And threatening spectres that pursue in haste
Thro' dismal aisles, and cities overthrown.
Hark ! 'tis the sound of War in heaven,
Death leads the armies of the air,
His Giants o'er the moonlight driven
Blow trumpets of despair ;
I hear a cry as of departing Powers,
And ere the banners of the foe be furl'd,
Beauty and Strength shall perish with the hours,
'Mid the fall'n fragments of a ruin'd world.
Three dead leaves of an aged vine
Tap doleful at my window-pane ;
The cold stars shudder, as they shine,
Thro' wind and gusty rain ;
Far off I hear the torrent waters thrown
Into the valley, like a battle-host,
The ancient forests in their sorrow groan,
And frightened Nature echoes "I am lost !"

The voice of one forlorn and blind,
A piteous voice, yet golden-sweet,
Comes in the pauses of the wind,
And makes my heart to beat ;
“Ah ! Death, ah ! Night, ah ! whither shall I fly
To some fond heart, as in the days of old ?
Take me, O friends, or surely I shall die,
The world is dark, and I am faint and cold !

A voice more solemn than the other
A tender voice, sublime in sadness,
Like brother speaking unto brother,
Soars thro' the stream's shrill madness ;
“Come to me, I will shield thee from the wind,
Forsaken Wanderer, wheresoe'er thou art ;
Come to my stricken heart, and thou shalt find
A home, and thou and I will never part.”

The thunder roll'd o'er land and sea,
The storm howl'd on o'er waste and city :
I knew that voice of agony,
I knew that voice of pity :
'Twas Love, fond Love, dejected and forsaken,
Seeking the Poet thro' the stormy elime ;
'Twas the sad Poet by the night o'ertaken,
That found lost Love amid the wrecks of Time.

VII.—THE GLORY OF NATURE.

(FROM A VOLUME PRINTED IN FLORENCE.)

IF only once the chariot of the Morn
Had scatter'd from its wheels the twilight dun,
But once the unimaginable Sun
Flash'd godlike through perennial clouds forlorn,
And shown us Beauty for a moment born :

If only once blind eyes had seen the Spring
Waking among the triumphs of midnoon
But once had seen the lovely Summer boon,
Pass by in state like a full robèd King,
The waters dance, the woodlands laugh and sing :

If only once deaf ears had heard the joy
Of the wild birds, or morning breezes blowing,
Of silver fountains from their caverns flowing,
Or the deep-voicèd rivers rolling by,
Then Night eternal fallen from the sky :

If only once weird Time had rent asunder
The curtain of the Clouds, and shown us Night
Climbing into the awful Infinite,
Those stairs whose steps are worlds above and under,
Glory on glory, wonder upon wonder !

The lightnings lit the earthquake on its way ;
The sovran thunder spoken to the World ;
The realm-wide banners of the Wind unfurl'd ;
Earth-prison'd Fires broke loose into the day ;
Or the great Seas awoke—then slept for aye !

Ah, sure the heart of Man too strongly tried
By godlike presences so vast and fair,
Withering in dread, or sick in love's despair,
Had wept for ever, and to Heaven cried,
Or struck with lightnings of delight had died.

But He though heir of immortality,
With mortal dust too feeble for the sight,
Draws through a veil God's overwhelming light—
Use arms the soul ; anon there moveth by
A more majestic Angel—and we die

VIII.—DAY AND NIGHT.

(FROM A VOLUME PRINTED IN FLORENCE.)

THOUGH utter darkness overcome the light
 Of moonlit night ;
 Though cloudy thunders rise and overrun
 The highway of the Sun ;
 When their gloom hath pass'd away
 From the fair midnight and day,
 The happy Sun returns unto the noon,
 And to her path in heaven the saintly-stol'd Moon.
 Though winter noons with sunlight and soft air
 Be still and fair ;
 Though summer midnights breathing breath of balm
 Be starry-bright and calm ;
 Soon the glory passeth by
 From the cold and stormy sky,
 And in sweet summer when the moon is down
 Unchangeable dread night puts on her ancient frown.
 So good and evil are not what they seem
 To the dark dream
 Of heartsick melancholy, or the madness
 Of overmuch of gladness ;
 But, like the moon and sun,
 Winter and night, they run
 Their stedfast courses farther than the sight
 Of joy with dazzled eyes, or sorrow without light.

IX.—ON THE PROSPECT OF EVIL DAYS.

A SONNET FOR THE CENTURY.

'TIS not a time for Triumph and Delight :
 For dance and song, for jocund thoughts and ease ;
 Like cloud on cloud before a stormy night
 Sorrows I see, and doleful deeds increase,—

Rebellion like the Urican shall come,
And Change, like mighty winds, whose lowering moan
Swells to a shout that makes the thunders dumb ;
And bloody Anarchs call the earth their own :
But when this time of Terror and Despair
Is past, though I be weary and o'erworn,
O let me live to breathe the freshen'd air,
And see the glory of that happy morn,
When the new Day shall o'er the mountains roll
And Love once more pour down his sunny soul.¹

X.—PHANTASIS.

PHANTASIS is an Angel sent from Heaven
To dwell with Man upon the mournful Earth :
To give him joy as when the radiant fire
Pours through the rent clouds of a winter's day ;
Phantasis is a rainbow in the Soul
Breaking the white light of the Sun of Truth
Into all colours ; if she fashions Time
She shows him in such grand and lovely shapes,
Transfiguring, transcending, glorifying,
As dwarf all shadows of the storied years
Save only the Divine ; Her magie moulds
From lifeless substance more than living grace ;
She robes and crowns herself as Nature's Queen ;
With all its splendours, hid from other eyes ;
And wafts herself upon the wings of song
Up to the gates of Heaven, and piles up fanes
To hold Her all the fairest on the earth.

¹ This sonnet, which has hitherto been unpublished, was given by the poet to Mrs. Brotherton many years ago.

THE ISLES OF GREECE.

1890.

FREDERICK TENNYSON.

I.

ANAKTORIA.

(III.)

LIKE Summer birds that fly from bough to bough,
And bathe their songs in light, and the rich breath
Of fullblown flowers, we sped from shore to shore,
Fed with the charm of change ; till real life
Show'd as unreal, like a spectacle.
Seen at a theatre, or dreams that lapse
Into fresh dreams, or glancing of a stream
Through evergreens, and ever-varying blooms.
And when we anchor'd in the pleasant port
Of Himera, among the first we met
Was Tisias, whom men style Stesichorus ;
For that he crown'd plain song with harmonies,
And led the choral march its step sublime.
For many days we wander'd forth with him,
A courteous host, and gentle ; and he said :—
“ I am a self-made exile in this land :
Far from my native hills, where dwelt my sires
In days before ; the ancient cities there,
With their grey walls that seem by giants wrought,
Know me no more ; and here all things are new.”
And then he show'd us sunny Himera ;
Its stainless marbles mirror'd in the calm
And purple waters, the unfinish'd walls
And yet defenceless gates ; great theatres
But halfway from the ground ; uncolumn'd fanes
With still unsculptured pediments, to be
Henceforth the thrones of godlike forms, portray'd
By mortal hands that wield immortal art ;

To live ev'n when the very names are dead
Of them who shaped them : "Strange it is," he said,
"To see the solitude swept by the winds,
That heard for ages but the seabird's cry,
Or fisher's low sad song, transform'd, as 'twere,
By magic art, into a world of life ;
Henceforth to make this little plot of earth—
Where spring and autumn, day and night, and waves,
And winds, were monarchs only, leaving nought
To mark their empire of a thousand years—
Gather within itself in one brief day
Swifter and vaster change : where man is king,
The mind of man is as a mighty wind ;
The thousand years of time as the great sea
Blown on perpetually, that strows the shore
With countless wrecks, but piles the space between
With gold, and pearl, and every precious gem,
That rise and shine for ever." As he spake,
We heard from far and near the mingled sounds
Of masons, shouting from the scaffolds tall ;
Hammer and saw, and anvil, and the gride
Of carven stone ; and still from far and near
The tumult soften'd with the sound of songs.
And many days we listen'd to his voice
Of tuneful melancholy : oft he sued
In vain to hear a song of mine ; ah me !
Not yet the fancies lock'd within my soul
Had sprung to life again, the frozen rills
Of melody to freedom ; but I seized
A lyre, and wrung from it, I knew not how,
So wild and sweet a carol ; as when a gust
Of summer rain wrings from a ruffled rose
Its rarest breath, and mingles it with tears.
He look'd on me in wonder ; and he said :—

“As is the spirit to a lovely form ;
As is the perfume to a purple flower ;
As is the music to that song of thine,
Making it utter something more than words ;
So are the words themselves, though all too few,
Speaking of maiden love unrecompensed ;
As ’twere a better soul which thou hast given
To an old tale of mine which thou shalt hear.”

II.

KLEIS, OR THE RETURN.

(11.)

AND Sappho stood, and linger’d for a while,
Shading her brows to look upon the shore,
The piled city, and the purple hills.
And with a sigh that seemed to wing her soul
Back to the dawn of Youth, thro’ joy and tears
Commingle, like the dews and light that lay
On land and sea betwixt her and the sun,
Sweetly she said ; “ It is another morn ;
And yet I live, tho’ many days like these
I cannot hope to breathe ; yet all the more
The blessed hours that give me rest from pain
Are openings into Heaven, thro’ which I see
The lovely hopes, and phantasies of Youth,
Waft down to me from the blue arch of day,
Melodious as the skylark’s sundrown’d song,
And radiant as his earthward-fluttering wing.
Yet dreams, however fair, are only dreams,
Tho’ from the Unseen, where the Immortals are,
And they are flown, they look back for a moment.
Ah ! can they raise the stricken flower of Life,
And bring back Youth ? oh ! tell me not of bliss
Born of Imagination, the great eagle

Whose eyes may dare to look upon the sun
And are not blind ; oh ! tell me not of Fame,
Although its outspread wings may hide the earth,
And with their shadows touch the walls of Time.
Tell me not of those moments in our lives,
Which, like the troubled seas that flash with light,
Mix glory and despair, but leave the heart
Still as the deeps from which the storm is pass'd,
And not a wave is heard ; for in my soul
The pæans of old triumphs faintly heard,
The voices of departed joys, loves, hopes,
Power, honours, exultations, are but ghosts,
And, like thin ghosts that vanish in the sun,
Charm not so much as that diviner spell,
That from the heart of Nature speaks to ours.
Now, as I breathe the spirits from the deep,
And see these shores that first I saw, the hills,
The azure isles, the selfsame pulse of old
Thrills me again, and tho' the arm of Death
Daily advances its cold shadow o'er me
Nigher and nigher, moments like to these
The first I felt, the last I hope to feel ;
Such moments, O dear girl, make it appear
As tho' to die were to be born again.
Ah, lovely land, perchance in days to come,
When I am dead, and thunder-bearing change
Hath left, of all this proud Time in full sail,
A crazy wreck, some lonely, listening Muse
Shall mark thee through the cloud of Ages flown,
As I, behind the veil of many years,
Behold my proper life ; and of my songs,
Faint echoes of the fiery life within,
A few sad notes shall tremble, like the light
That strikes the zenith when the sun is down."

With that she stay'd midway between the shore
And that vine-mantled home, a little space
Of musing and of calm ; then with fond hand,
Tenderly laid upon the sunny brow
Of that fair one, she said—" My little Kleis ;
Tho' thou art taller than thy mother is,
So call'd because she was the silver key
That should unlock my heart of hearts ; my Kleis,
Oh let me look into thy face awhile,
If so I can recall the thing I was
When thy few years were mine ; yes, in thine eyes
I see the stars of mirth, the lamp of thought.
On thy smooth brow the free winds from the seas
Have laid their cool wings, night and morn, until
Spirits, less pure than Honour, Hope, and Love,
Find no rest there ; but kinder Fates than mine,
Under the links of graver sympathies,
Have chain'd the God of Fancy in thy soul ;
So that his darings shall not lift thee up
Above the lights and shadows of thine home,
Its cares, its consolations, and its joys,
The tender memories of the parted year,
Hope of to-morrow's sunshine, and a time
Of ample harvests, and fair vintage days,
And songs when toil is o'er. Thou shalt not feel
Swift passions toss thee, like midsummer storms,
That snatch the green leaf from the virgin vine ;
No, nor those thoughts, like Autumn winds and rain,
That rend the naked boughs, and strew the leaves,
Or weep them off in silence to the ground.
The great soul of thy grandsire, now at peace,
Descending thro' thy mother's into thine,
Tempers within thy heart the throbs of mine,
Its glories, and its anguish. Come with me ;

Yonder he sleeps, within an urn he sleeps,
Lull'd by the music of an endless dirge,
Upon yon slope that dips into the blue
Its green the soonest in the days of Spring.
The hyacinths cluster there, as though athirst
To drink the azure seas ; the anemone,
And violet tremble, and four whispering planes
Make an immortal temple o'er his dust.
Not far apart he rests, but just so far
As makes the thunder of the waves below
A pleasant murmur, a deep harmony,
Wedding the treble of the surf that wails
Among the rocks, and shells, and the soft sighings
Of the broad leaves that rustle over him.
Come thither, Kleis, with me ; come hear that hymn
Sung to the spirit of a noble man,
Who wrought in act what I in many a song
Have mock'd, like echoes in a narrow place.

(III.)

Thither I bore his urn, ten years ago,
By moonlight, sadly claspt unto my heart ;
And I could hear my sighs, for every wind
Was still ; it was a dreaming Autumn night
Nigh unto Winter, in the latter days ;
And the full moon rode stately up the seas
Of purple, caught at intervals thro' rifts
Of sable cloud ; and then the illumined Earth
Smiled on me a funereal welcome stern,
And sorrowful ; and from the city rose,
Thro' the pale hush of night, sounds that to me
Were sadder than a banquet skeleton,
Of festal jubilee, of harp and voice,
Unto my widow'd heart disconsolate
Like shadows of the Dead, fantastic ghosts

Seen pale and cold far over Lethe's stream."
Just then they rounded a thyme-breathing hill,
Infolding to a valley gay with flowers,
And mossy-green and cool, for it drank in
The spirits of the seas, and multiplied
Its sighs, its lamentations, and its thunders,
With manifold echoes ; nothing fill'd it now
But an unsleeping murmur, holy-sweet,
Much like the weird tongue of the midnight silence,
Muttering to wakeful ears that wait for Death.
And halfway 'twixt it and the yellow beach
A little temple, open to the sea,
Stood under shelter of four whispering planes.
They enter'd by two marble steps, and heard
The melancholy music of the waters
Wax loud, as in the hollows of a shell.
Upon a pedestal beneath the dome
Rested an urn of gracious mould, and round it
The doubling echoes loved to swell and fall,
An inarticulate utterance, as of grief
Made musical with love. . . .

(v.)

Ah ! sad Old Age, that, like the stem, survives
Leaf, flower, and fruit ; Old Age, that not alone
Quenches the Soul's bright signals in the eye,
Pulls down the heart's warm banners in the cheek ;
But, in the heart itself and in the soul,
Leaves only memories, that, like winter winds,
Howl thro' the roofless halls, and desolate courts
Of sometime Temples ; memories, wither'd leaves
Of Summer roses ; pale discrowned Kings ;
Thin-voiced ghosts. Yet will I not lament
That I have spoken with the Dead in life ;
That I have seen the Teian crown'd with flowers,

Changed with the wild Alcæus glorious words ;
That I have kiss'd Erinna, and on the shores
Of Himera talk'd with grave Stesichorus.
What if the grey sea part us in this world,
Or Acheron in the Shades ? they cannot part
Our souls, which blissful thoughts, and golden words,
Have link'd for ever. I will not lament
That I have tasted the good things of Time,
Tho' their remember'd sweetness seems like sorrow.
This mystic Life is as a soundless sea,
The tempests shatter it, the thunders shade ;
And inarticulate voices from the clouds
Roll over it, and the winds run riot on it ;
Yet are these passing moments heavenly-fair,
Breathings of Spring, Midsummer glories, hues
Of Autumn, trembling showers of light, and smiles
Of moonshine dimpling ; and, when storms have ceased
Hope, like the halcyon, sings ; and I have lived
Through all, and glass'd within me every change.
I will not murmur. Yet, oh ! could it be,
That I might see once more before I die,
But one of those, whose songs, like vesper airs
That flutter among harpstrings, keep my soul
A-trembling with the sympathies of old.
If I could touch the hand of one I loved
Just as mine eyes grew dim, that bliss would be
More full of hope in Death, than pleasant dreams,
That kindle in the brains of drowning men.
Better the twilight of a day of June
Than noontides of December without sun.
Better to die for love, so that we lie
Upon the breast of Hope, than live for ever
Beneath the starless void of loveless thoughts
And phantasies that darken to despair."

DAPHNE.

FREDERICK TENNYSON.

I.

ÆSON.—PART II.

(x1.)

WHEN I was left alone upon the earth
At last, with not a soul of all I loved
To cheer me, when the gulf of second age
Had swallowed up my second life, again
Thoughts of the first old age that I had borne
Mixed with the second, as night speaks to night
In silence and in shadows, and in fears ;
Till the two long perspectives grew to one.
The old, far spectres jostled one another
Along that moonlit road ; and then again
They parted, and the ancient ghosts of all
Drowned in so far a distance, that I dreamed,
Sometimes, that one half of the awful past
Of this my double life was not in Time,
But sundered by immeasurable years.
And, o'er the wailing waters I could hear
The voices of those far-off inner days,
Like dreams in moonlight. In that gloomy calm
Of twofold Eld, I sat, as in a cave ;
And all the murmurs of the life of man,
Its conflicts, and its triumphs, all the mirth
And beauty of the morning, as it rose,

With songs of birds and children, and unbound
The wings of balmy winds, and blew the drops
Of sweet dew's o'er my forehead, came to me,
As unto one o'er whom the waters roll
Deeper, and deeper still. And then I heard
(Silence and twilight round me) in my heart's
Far galleries, as it were the banded tongues
Of all my years, uplifted into one
Acclaim ; as when far down in rayless vales,
The torrents fallen from the golden peaks,
Are floated on the wind. Methought I heard
The accents of old friends, and over clouds
Saw their raised heads and outstretched arms ;
methought

They called me : whither ? Could I wish to live
Another life ? Ah ! Yes with them, with them,
But where were they ? What if this mortal life,
Which I had dared to meet a second time,
Were but the narrow gate thro' which we pass,
As from a lamplit slumbrous chamber, to
The million lights of day ? If I had borne,
As bliss, a bitter wrong unto myself
Deeming my fortune better than all men's
Who had not length of days ? O fool, O fool !
If this were so, and this poor life a cell
Re-entered by some faint o'erwearied man,
With eyes so weak they dared not meet the sun !

II.

PYGMALION.

(IX.)

TAKE her, she is worthy of thee.
For she hath fed on wildflowers, and hath drunk
The dew's of Nature ; she hath mark'd the changes

Of the swift year, with love's own faithful art ;
Sweet pictures in the chambers of her heart
She hath hung up ; clear morns and glowing evens ;
Green turf-walks murmuring with the noonday bees,
And summer birds ; and they shall never fade ;
The majesty of midnight with its stars
And summer moon ; and she hath loved to watch
When the dread winter winds began to blow ;
To see the moon run up the thunder-hills ;
The glory of the tempest, and its gloom
Rended with fire ; and all things that are sweet,
Noble, and pure, have made of her one heart
A mirror that shall give back all of thine.
Beauty is Beauty's mate ; thus should it be ;
And Phantasy, that makes thee what thou art,
Breathing from thee upon the magic mirror,
Will call to life, as often as thou wilt,
Thine own best thoughts for answer, and shall burnish
Those hues, and forms of memory, till they live
A better life impregnated by thine :
So love in ye shall be a twofold one.
Not only this, but whatsoe'er she lacks
Thou wilt supply, and what in thee is not
She shall give to thee : thus for evermore
Shall ye spread in variety, for ever
Be centred more and more in Unity,
Till everlasting Æons shall but serve
To bring ye more together !

Charles Tennyson Turner.

1808—1879.

CHARLES TENNYSON was the third son of the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, LL.D., Rector of Somersby and Enderby, Lincolnshire, and an elder brother of the Poet Laureate. The scenery round his home at Somersby made a deep impression on him, as on Alfred, and many reminiscences of it appear in his poems. Mr. Hallam Tennyson, in the short sketch which he prefixed to the "Collected Sonnets" of 1880, says: "In later life he would often recall with affection his early haunts, the grey hill near the Rectory, the winding lanes shadowed by tall elm-trees, and the two brooks that meet at the bottom of the glebe-field." He went with Alfred to the Louth Grammar School, and remained there some years. It was whilst there that many of the poems in the now famous volume, "Poems by Two Brothers," were composed, and in 1827 they were published, though the two brothers had then left the Louth School, by Messrs. J. and J. Jackson, of Louth. This volume, now so precious and so often referred to, was marked by much felicity, and indicated a wide range of interests; but it was in many respects, as indeed was to be expected from the youth of the writers, immature and imitative: reminiscences of Lord Byron's poems,—especially the "Hebrew Melodies,"—and of Moore's and others, being per-

ceptible. Perhaps the last poem in the volume, "King Charles's Vision," was as strong and original as any.

It is worthy of note, as indicating remarkable insight on the part of these Louth booksellers, that they had such belief in the poems of the two brothers, that they engaged to pay £10 for the copyright, and, in fact, ultimately paid £20.

When Charles returned from Louth, his education was carried on by his father. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1828, and while there showed such felicity in rendering the Greek and Roman Classics into poetical English, that he obtained the Bell Scholarship. His friends regarded him as a poet of great promise. His modesty was at least equal to his genius; for we find him frequently deprecating the praises bestowed upon him. He graduated in 1832, and was ordained in 1835; became first Curate of Tealby, and afterwards Vicar of Grasby, which to the end he remained. In 1837 he married Louisa Sellwood, the sister of Lady Tennyson; and in 1838, by the will of his great-uncle, Samuel Turner of Caistor, he succeeded to his estate, and took the name of Turner. For a while the couple lived at their own house in Caistor, three miles from Grasby; but by-and-bye they tenanted the somewhat ruinous vicarage, that they might really live among their people. A serious illness caused Mr. Tennyson to be a long time absent from Grasby. He returned, happily, with renewed health; and for nearly thirty years ministered to his people, going out and in among them—a true pastor; and his wife in all things was a devoted helpmate. At their own expense they built the new vicarage, the new church, and the

schools. They seldom left home, and never for very long. For some years before 1879 his health failed. In that year he felt so ill that he went to Cheltenham, to be under the care of an old friend, Dr. Ker, and he died there peacefully on April 25th, of that year.

In scarcely any case is it more necessary to realize the circumstances amid which the poet lived, in order to do justice to his poetry, than it is in that of Charles Tennyson. His verse is saturated with the sense of his duties and his position as a parish priest. Not that he descends to any kind of formal teaching, save, indeed, in some of the later sonnets, when he was rather severe on the neological ideas which then threatened to invade even the rural parishes, through cheap translations of the works of Strauss, Renan, and others. In reading the sonnets we can see him moving about in his parish, succouring the poor, consoling the sick, cheering the aged folk, and speaking kindly to the children; thinking, as he goes, of the news that had that day reached him from the great world, and with an eye ever open to new beauties and new phases of nature. One who knew Charles Tennyson well, could not help regarding Dr. Johnson's Latin epigram on Parnell as especially applicable to him, and thus turned it into English verse, and wrote it in the fly-leaf of his sonnet-book :—

“ Poet and Priest alike, in neither least,
In both complete, though far too meek to know it ;
For not the Poet's sweetness lacks the Priest
And not the Priestly holiness the Poet.”

The slightest incident, the most ordinary event of his daily life, is enough to stir his retiring muse :

the first budding green of the spring, the later yellowing leaves of autumn still clinging to the trees, the harvest-field, the first note of cuckoo or nightingale, the coming of the swallows, the first ice in winter, the beautiful play of light through the lattice, the setting free of a prisoned bird, the impression made on his children by some new book,—these are his themes; and he treats them with such simplicity, grace, and occasional sustained beauty of phrase, never affected or overdone, as may well justify what Mr. Hallam Tennyson tells us in his preface to the “Collected Sonnets” of 1880. “I may add,” he writes, “that in my father’s judgment some of the sonnets have all the tenderness of the Greek epigram; and that he ranks a few of them among the noblest in our language.”

This is no utterance of brotherly partiality. It is but another way of saying what Coleridge had said long before in his marginal notes to the little volume of 1830; though there, Coleridge, while doing full justice to the poetic beauty and power of many of the sonnets, seizes what is too often their weak point—the author stooping too readily to moralize his song, or rather his sonnet, and becoming crude, careless, and obscure in the closing lines, which should be strongest and most sustained. He speaks of the sonnet “On Startling some Pigeons” as a sweet sonnet, and, with the exception of one word “little” in the last line,—

“An eagle, weary of his mighty wings,
With anxious inquest fills his *little* span,”—

faultless. “‘Little’ might have been a proper word if man had been contemplated positively. Not so com-

paratively in his eagle-antithesis¹ to the pigeons." "Little," in deference to Coleridge's criticism, in the later editions became "mortal." On the sonnet numbered XX in the volume of 1830—"Vessel of Britain, proudly wert thou going," Coleridge makes a criticism which is highly laudatory of the poet, but passes on to a reflection which is very characteristic of the writer, as revealing a trait certainly not unexpected, but certainly not very common :—

"I could almost envy young Tennyson the feeling of this sonnet. But alas! my stern reflection on reading it was—'Restore the crew to life! For what? A few perhaps to be hung, and how many to deserve hanging!' But it is constitutional with me that I cannot—I never could—sympathise with the fear of death as death."

"The Ocean at the Bidding of the Moon" is declared to be a noble sonnet—which surely it is; and Coleridge's general declaration on the sonnets of 1830 is that "a large proportion of these sonnets stand between Wordsworth's and Southey's, and partake of the excellencies of both." Coleridge, however, points out as faults the use of such rhymes as "pass'd" and "haste," and of old words, the colloquial phrases of the last century, such as "swound," which, as he says, are well enough in the mouth of the Ancient Mariner, but not in such a composition as the sonnet.

Much has been written with regard to the form

¹ Mr. Hallam Tennyson, in the "Collected Sonnets," 1880, prints notes from MS. notes by Coleridge in his possession, which is surely a boon to readers generally, but he gives "relations" instead of "antithesis" here—a different reading from that of the British Museum copy, which we collated with the volume of 1880.

of Mr. Charles Tennyson's sonnets—some critics declaring them to be quite untrue to the pure sonnet form; and others—notably Mr. James Spedding, in his introduction to the "Collected Sonnets" volume of 1880—defending them, and offering many apt instances and illustrations.² It is a very pedantic and exacting criticism surely that would overlook the fact that even with the Italian writers—with Petrarch himself—the form was sometimes varied so far as to approach the Shakespearean model, though invariably, I think, the number of rhymes proper to the purer Petrarchan form is observed. That is true also of Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, and others. Mr. Charles Tennyson finds a modified Shakespearean form to suffice him; and, since it is his intention to produce sonnets in this form, it is almost beside the mark to criticise him for not producing sonnets such as he never pretended to write. The great question is about unity and harmony; and these, in the more successful examples, he certainly secures. A much more definitive criticism is, that sometimes he is less attentive to phrases and rhymes than he might be, and in cases where the slightest care would have enabled him to triumph over difficulties which are hardly even technical. For example, in the otherwise most lovely sonnet, "The Artist on Penmaenmawr," its effect was greatly spoiled to us by the rhyming of "calm" with "warm," which every

² Mr. Spedding, by the way, is wrong, however, when he says that the version which he gives of Wordsworth's Sonnet, "Why art thou Silent?" is correct in form. The second part of the octave preserves the rhymes, but misplaces them; in fact, it there passes into the Shakespearean form and is irregular strictly, just as some of Mr. C. Tennyson's are.

one will admit is indefensible. And to show that only a little labour of the file—such as he could easily have given—was needed to secure freedom from such solecisms is seen in his rewriting the Sonnet XXII. of the 1830 vol., “Seest thou her Blushes,” for the vol. of 1873, where it bears the title, “A Blush at Farewell.” We see distinctly here an attempt to pass from the modified Shakespearean form to the true octave and sestet, though the law of limiting rhymes is not strictly observed. But just in the degree that the form of 1873 is, in our opinion, superior to the earlier one, it approaches to the pure form of Petrarchan sonnet; and this is curious in the case of a man so apparently indisposed in the last resort to sacrifice much for niceties of form *merely*.

The truth is, Mr. Charles Tennyson found his conceptions flow so freely into the form which he had so persistently cultivated, that, having once written down his verses, he seemed to have little or no power of self-criticism, and could hardly himself distinguish between what was more and what was less valuable in his work. He was often inclined to lay too great a stress on the idea or thought merely. And this trait lay, perhaps, in closer connection than might at first be realized with that depression and doubt of his own originality to which he only too often yielded, not believing, as he might, that in a majority of cases he had realized the true idea of the sonnet he himself had embodied thus :—

“The sonnet, poising one bright thought
That moves, but does not vanish, borne along
Like light, a golden drift thro’ all the song.”

It is almost incredible that this true poet should have been practically silenced for years from this feeling. He himself tells us that—

“The edge of thought was blunted by the stress
Of the hard world ; my fancy had waxed dull,
All nature seemed less nobly beautiful—
Robbed of her grandeur and her loveliness :
Methought the muse within my heart had died.”

But Mr. Spedding speaks of his humility, and his depression due to doubts of his own success. Here is one of his sonnets which reflects this phase, and in workmanship too is characteristic :—

“TO A FRIEND.

“My low deserts consist not with applause
So kindly—when I fain would deem it so,
My sad heart, musing on its proper flaws,
Thy gentle commendation must forego ;
As toys, which, glued together, hold awhile,
But haply, brought too near some scorching fire,
Start from their frail compacture and beguile
The child, that pieced them, of his fond desire :
I was a very child for that brief tide,
Whenas I join’d and solder’d thy good word
With my poor merits—’twas a moment’s pride—
The flames of conscience sundered their accord :
My heart dropt off in sorrow for thy praise,
Self-knowledge baulked self-love so many ways.”

There can be no doubt this was quite sincere ; and if we feel that the artist in aught was less thereby, the man was surely more. Of what prosaic trifles his exquisite genius could make poems. Let any one turn to that sonnet titled “Written at the Wood Sale of Messrs. Blank & Co., Non-Resident Proprietors,” or to that other beginning—

“Alexis seized a prisoned butterfly
To set it free,”

and they will at once perceive what is meant. The "beautiful soul" is seen in every movement of his muse. He is delightfully single-minded, disinclined to any resource that may seem merely artistic or self-conscious. His mind is like a crystal to take the shape and colour of what is presented to it, and seen in that crystal all is transformed, beautified. He did not need to travel far—"to trundle back his soul a thousand years"—to find subjects for poetic treatment; the events, the sights, the scenes of every day, in his quiet rural parish, were enough. The book thus becomes a faithful mirror of a good man's life, whose wealth of good will and charity are not exhausted in it. In few cases have poems been more directly written from the heart and personal feeling. Viewed thus, it will not perhaps seem an unfit close to this sketch, if we avail ourselves of Lord Tennyson's kind permission to quote the touching verses which he prefixed to the "Collected Sonnets"; they picture such a man and brother as from the sonnets we should have judged him to have been:—

MIDNIGHT.

June 30, 1879.

I.

"Midnight—in no midsummer tune
The breakers lash the shores :
The cuckoo of a joyless June
Is calling out of doors :

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own
To that which looks like rest,
True brother, only to be known
By those who love thee best.

II.

"Midnight—and joyless June gone by,
And from the deluged park
The cuckoo of a worse July
Is calling thro' the dark :

But thou art silent underground,
And o'er thee streams the rain,
True poet, surely to be found
When Truth is found again.

III.

"And, now to these unsummer'd skies
The summer bird is still,
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries
From out a phantom hill ;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun
Of sixty years away,
The light of days when life begun
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with thee,
And all my hopes were thine—
As all thou wert was one to me,
May all thou art be mine !"

ALEX. H. JAPP.

SONNETS.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

I.—ST. AUGUSTINE AND MONICA.

WHEN Monica's young son had felt her kiss—
Her weeping kiss—for years, her sorrow flow'd
At last into his wilful blood ; he owed
To her his after-life of truth and bliss :
And her own joy, what words, what thoughts could paint !
When o'er his soul, with sweet constraining force,
Came Penitence—a fusion from remorse—
And made her boy a glorious Christian saint.
Oh ye, who tend the young through doubtful years
Along the busy path from birth to death,
Parents and friends ! forget not in your fears
The secret strength of prayer, the holy breath
That swathes your darlings ! think how Austin's faith
Rose like a star upon his mother's tears !

II.—THE ROOKERY.

METHOUGHT, as I beheld the rookery pass
Homeward at dusk upon the rising wind,
How every heart in that close-flying mass
Was well befriended by th' Almighty mind :
He marks each sable wing that soars or drops,
He sees them forth at morning to their fare,
He sets them floating on His evening air,
He sends them home to rest on the tree-tops :
And when through umber'd leaves the night-winds pour,
With lusty impulse rocking all the grove—
The stress is measured by an eye of love,
No root is burst, though all the branches roar ;
And, in the morning, cheerly as before,
The dark clan talks, the social instincts move,

III.—ORION.

HOW oft I've watched thee from the garden croft,
In silence, when the busy day was done,
Shining with wondrous brilliancy aloft,
And flickering like a casement 'gainst the sun :
I've seen thee soar from out some snowy cloud,
Which held the frozen breath of land and sea,
Yet broke and sever'd as the wind grew loud—
But earth-bound winds could not dismember thee,
Nor shake thy frame of jewels ; I have guess'd
At thy strange shape and function, haply felt
The charm of that old myth about thy belt
And sword ; but, most, my spirit was possest
By His great Presence, Who is never far
From his light-bearers, whether man or star.

IV.—THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

TAKE that airy harp from out the gale,
Its troubles call from such a distant bourne,
Now that the wind has wooed it to its tale
Of bygone bliss, that never can return ;
Hark ! with what dreamy sadness it is swelling !
How sweet it falls, unwinding from the breeze !
Disordered music, deep and tear-compelling,
Like siren-voices pealing o'er the seas.
Nay, take it not, for now my tears are stealing,
But when it brake upon my mirthful hour,
And spake to joy of sorrow past the healing,
I shrank beneath the soft subduing power ;
Nay, take it not ; replace it by my bower—
The soul can thrill with no diviner feeling.

V.—THE LITTLE HEIR OF SHAME.

HE was a little heir of shame—his birth
Announced by peevish voices, and his death
Welcomed by all ; he staid not long on earth,
Nor vex'd them long with his fast-fleeting breath ;
He felt their blows, too young to feel their scorn ;
How that poor babe was beaten and reviled,
Because, albeit so mischievously born,
He wail'd as loudly as a lawful child !
They hurried to the goal his faltering pace ;
Full soon they bore him to his mother's grave ;
No more for other's sin accounted base,
In Paradise he shows his harmless face ;
The Saviour flinches not from his embrace,
But gives him all his infant-heart can crave.

VI.—TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O HONEY-THROATED warbler of the grove !
That in the glooming woodland art so proud
Of answering thy sweet mates in soft or loud,
Thou dost not own a note we do not love ;
The moon is o'er thee, laying out the lawn
In mighty shadows—but the western skies
Are kept awake, to see the sun arise,
Though earth and heaven would fain put back the
dawn !
While, wandering for the dreams such seasons give,
With lonely steps, and many a pause between,
The lover listens to thy songs unseen ;
And if at times, the pure notes seem to grieve,
Why lo ! he weeps himself, and must believe
That sorrow is a part of what they mean !

VII., VIII.—THE VACANT CAGE.

OUR little bird in his full day of health
With his gold-coated beauty made us glad,
But when disease approach'd with cruel stealth,
A sadder interest our smiles forbad.
How oft we watch'd him, when the night hours came,
His poor head buried near his bursting heart,
Which beat within a puffed and troubled frame ;
But he has gone at last, and play'd his part :
The seed-glass, slighted by his sickening taste,
The little moulted feathers, saffron-tipt,
The fountain, where his fever'd bill was dipt,
The perches, which his failing feet embraced,
All these remain—not even his bath removed—
But where's the spray and flutter that we loved ?

HE shall not be cast out like wild-wood things !
We will not spurn those delicate remains ;
No heat shall blanch his plumes, nor soaking rains
Shall wash the saffron from his little wings ;
Nor shall he be inearth'd—but in his cage
Stand, with his innocent beauty unimpair'd ;
And all the skilled'st hand can do, to assuage
Poor Dora's grief, by more than Dora shared,
Shall here be done. What though these orbs of glass
Will feebly represent his merry look
Of recognition, when he saw her pass,
Or from her palm the melting cherry took—
Yet the artist's kindly craft shall not retain
The filming eye, and beak that gasp'd with pain.

IX.—AN APRIL DAY.

THE lark sung loud ; the music at his heart
Had call'd him early ; upward straight he went,
And bore in nature's quire the merriest part,
As to the lake's broad shore my steps I bent ;
The waterflies with glancing motion drove
Their dimpling eddies in among the blooms
Shed by the flowering poplars from above ;
While, overhead, the rooks, on sable plumes,
Floated and dipt about the gleaming haze
Of April, crost anon by April glooms,
As is the fashion of her changeful days ;
When, what the rain-cloud blots, the sun relumes
O' the instant, and the shifting landscape shows
Each change, and, like a tide, the distance comes
and goes.

X.—THE LATTICE AT SUNRISE.

AS on my bed at dawn I mused and pray'd,
I saw my lattice pranked upon the wall,
The flaunting leaves and flitting birds withal—
A sunny phantom interlaced with shade ;
“Thanks be to heaven !” in happy mood I said,
“What sweeter aid my matins could befall
Than this fair glory from the East hath made ?
What holy sleights hath God, the Lord of all,
To bid us feel and see ! we are not free
To say we see not, for the glory comes
Nightly and daily, like the flowing sea ;
His lustre pierceth through the midnight glooms ;
And, at prime hour, behold ! He follows me
With golden shadows to my secret rooms !”

*XI.—ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S DESIGNS AT
BABYLON FRUSTRATED.*

HE plied Hephæstion's ear with royal schemes
Over the wine-cup ; hollow rang his voice
From barrier-rocks of Providence, and gleams
Of fatal fever lighten'd from his eyes ;
He thought to build and drain with busy power—
But could not pass beyond the appointed goal ;
For the strong ward of one prophetic scroll
Had frayed the horns of Ammon, and his hour
Drew nigh ; Time sped—the bitterns throng'd the
strand,
And shook the sight of his imperial dream
With booming, and the drossy of the land
Grew from the untended waters ; evening's beam,
And morn's, look'd down upon a realm of fear,
With pools and mounds and marshes far and near.

XII.—LETTY'S GLOBE.

WHEN Letty had scarce pass'd her third glad year,
And her young, artless words began to flow,
One day we gave the child a colour'd sphere
Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know,
By tint and outline, all its sea and land.
She patted all the world ; old empires peep'd
Between her baby fingers ; her soft hand
Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leap'd,
And laugh'd, and prattled in her world-wide bliss ;
But when we turned her sweet unlearned eye
On our own isle, she raised a joyous cry,
“ Oh ! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there ! ”
And, while she hid all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

XIII.—ON SHOOTING A SWALLOW IN EARLY YOUTH.

I HOARD a little spring of secret tears,
I For thee, poor bird; thy death-blow was my crime:
From the far past it has flow'd on for years;
It never dries; it brims at swallow-time.
No kindly voice within me took thy part,
Till I stood o'er thy last faint flutterings;
Since then, methinks, I have a gentler heart,
And gaze with pity on all wounded wings.
Full oft the vision of thy fallen head,
Twittering in highway dust, appeals to me;
Thy helpless form, as when I struck thee dead,
Drops out from every swallow-flight I see.
I would not have thine airy spirit lald,
I seem to love the little ghost I made.

XIV.—TO THE LARK.

AND am I up with thee, light-hearted minion?
A Who never dost thine early flight forego,
Catching for aye upon thy gamesome pinion
What was to fill some lily's cup below,
The matin dew-fall? What is half so thrilling
As thy glad voice i' th' argent prime of light?
Whether in grassy nest, when thou art billing,
Or thus aloft and mocking human sight?
Peace dwells with thee for ever—not the peace
Of cool reflection, but redundant glee,
And with such vocal token of wild ease
Thou dost reveal thy proud immunity
From mortal care, that thou perforce must please:
Fair fall thy rapid song, sweet bird, and thee!

XV.—ON STARTLING SOME PIGEONS.

A HUNDRED wings are dropt as soft as one,
Now ye are lighted ! Pleasing to my sight
The fearful circle of your wondering flight,
Rapid and loud, and drawing homeward soon ;
And then, the sober chiding of your tone,
As there ye sit, from your own roofs arraigning
My trespass on your haunts, so boldly done,
Sounds like a solemn and a just complaining :
O happy, happy race ! for though there clings
A feeble fear about your timid clan,
Yet are ye blest ! with not a thought that brings
Disquietude,—while proud and sorrowing man,
An eagle, weary of his mighty wings,
With anxious inquest fills his mortal span.

XVI.—A BLUSH AT FAREWELL.

HER tears are all thine own ! how blest thou art !
Thine, too, the blush which no reserve can
bind ;
Thy farewell voice was as the stirring wind
That floats the rose-bloom ; thou hast won her heart ;
Dear are the hopes it ushers to thy breast ;
She speaks not—but she gives her silent bond ;
And thou may'st trust it, asking nought beyond
The promise, which as yet no words attest ;
Deep in her bosom sinks the conscious glow,
And deep in thine ! and I can well foresee,
If thou shalt feel a lover's jealousy
For her brief absence, what a ruling power
A bygone blush shall prove ! until the hour
Of meeting, when thy next love-rose shall blow.

LYRICS.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

I.—MY MOTHER.

THINK'ST thou if spirits pure as thine
Through life might be for ever near,
I should not every fear resign,
As from my boyhood's home I steer ?

A mother heard our infant cries,
And folded us with fond embrace,
And when we woke, our infant eyes
Were opened on a mother's face.

Our wishes she did make her own,
Her bosom fed and pillow'd too,
Answering each start or fitful moan
With trembling pulses fond and true.

Then knowledge was a thing untaught ;
Heaven's charity, a daily dole,
Stole in inaudibly, and wrought
Its gentle bonds about the soul.

And oh ! if spirits pure as thine
Through life might be for ever near,
There would be scantier chance that mine
Would sink beneath the doom I fear

II.—A FATHER TO HIS SICK CHILD ASLEEP.

HOW many bitter drops I've shed !
How many more there still may be
Due to thy little aching head
And fierce consuming malady !
Oh ! might this tear—this pleading sigh
Relieve thee, on thy way to die !

Thy feeble frame can ne'er withstand
This fever-heat from day to day ;
Poor snow-flake ! in a glowing hand
That steals thy slight-knit life away ;
Though Hope disclaims thy fragile mould ;
I would not hear thy death-bell toll'd.

I love thy glossy curls that close
About thy forehead, golden-bright ;
Or rest upon the fatal rose
Of thy young cheek, in clusters light ;
And those blue orbs, that wake so fair,
They almost bid me not despair.

Thy lips, my child, recall the smile
Of those I would not show thee now.
And she, who bless'd us both awhile,
Has left her spirit on thy brow ;
O doubly dear ! now her's is cold,
I would not hear thy death-bell toll'd !

Her voice was musical—but low
And weak, before she fell asleep ;
'Twas like the footfall in the snow,
Heard faintly, though it sank so deep ;
Like thine, her dying accents came,
Thou hast her voice, her look, her name ;

My life will wear a sunny guise,
If thou wilt dwell below with me,
And every morrow's sun shall rise
To greet my sight delightfully,
With thee, throughout the livelong hours,
To strew thy father's path with flowers ;
But if thou must from earth depart,
Long, long, my wounded heart must bleed ;
Though God can make that mourning heart
As lowly as the bending reed,
Yet to the last, till sense be cold,
I needs must hear thy death-bell toll'd !

III.—SLEEP AND DREAMS.

'TIS sweet, when hours of toil are o'er
To feel the slackening of repose,
When the faint lids can watch no more
And o'er the eyes of labour close,
Gently as falls, late pois'd above,
The pinion of th' alighting dove.

'Tis being's buoyant tone unstrung,
A life of softer pulse and breath,
A trance o'er all the senses flung,
And link'd in seeming bonds with death ;
Yet—for that flush'd and rosy glow,
Forbidding us to deem it so.

At times an autocratic dream,
The lord of midnight's eye and ear,
Tricks out and floats some hollow scheme,
That bursts with sunrise ! or brings near
Our joys and sorrows long gone by,
With more or less of glamour.

Perchance recalls the happy Past,
The tale of boyhood tells again ;
Perchance in memory's furnace cast,
It tracks the smarting steps of Pain ;
Yet 'tis an airy outline still
The morrow's reason cannot fill.

Of every form and every hue,
Where will the mazy visions end ?
For ever making links anew,
Like water drops, they catch and blend ;
And when grave judgment takes his place,
We stare and cannot state the case !

But he of dreamers dream'd the best,
Who felt delicious music thrill
His spirit, in his hour of rest,
And, waking, found it music still !
I would philosophy could tell
What made the sleeper dream so well !

Alfred Lord Tennyson.

1809.

LORD TENNYSON is perhaps the most efficient interpreter of the questioning unrest, the ardent aspiration, and dreamy retrospection of his time, which, though said to be materialistic, yet, in accesses of reaction, returns upon ideals often dim, vague, and distant, loves to shelter itself under the softened aerial shadows of romance, and to soothe itself to rest in a gentle melancholy—in a kind of dreamy, wistful regret. These tendencies Lord Tennyson has successfully set to music in forms so perfect that they have sometimes been spoken of as over-refined and elaborate. In this line, as in several others, Lord Tennyson has no competitor. Mr. Matthew Arnold was a fine exponent of certain aspects of this subdued melancholy and vague regret as seen particularly in "The Faded Leaves," and "Parting," and "Absence" especially, in the poems headed "Switzerland"; but he was in certain ways too cold, severe, and restrained to make himself fully "understood" of his contemporaries, at all events the less perfectly cultured of them. Arthur Hugh Clough, again, was the laureate of that haunting, regret, which comes not only of lost beliefs, but of doubts as to the validity of our feelings as "based on truth"—the ever-present sense of some sad unreality interposing between the soul and the laws

of the universe and of life. He only recovered purpose and hope in the dim faith of something undefined and distant on which man's reason and faith alike failed to lay certain conscious hold as a present and actual possession and inspiration. It could hardly be said of him that

"Like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'"

His own feelings, indeed, were submitted, with the same pause and hesitation, to questionings and cross-questionings, as outward dogmas and common beliefs; and what remains as *the* one lesson of Clough's life and effort is his honesty in his self-examinations and avowals—his lofty nonconformity to any authority, even in the form of common consent or "moral consciousness." His is the regret of the poetic sceptic.

Lord Tennyson has here touched no jarring lyre; and in addition to this he has exhibited the finest perception of the point at which science, silenced in front of the primal mysteries, surrenders its own proper point of view, and humbly takes the hand of imagination held out towards it.

"A saying, hard to shape in act :
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals
Wherever thought hath wedded fact."

Or in a strain still loftier and more sustained in the
"In Memoriam":—

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

"That nothing walks with aimless feet :
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete.

"That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

"Behold, we know not anything :
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

* * * *

"The wish that of the loving whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likeliest God within the soul ?

* * * *

"I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing or insect's eye ;
Nor thro' the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun :

"If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no more,'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

"A warmth within the heart would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'

"No ; like a child in doubt and fear :
But that blind clamour made me wise ;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near."

Flowing from these, if we may be allowed the phrase, as divergent streams, we have the poems in which, to a greater or lesser degree, problems of belief, and life, and mind are dealt with—poems

such as "The Two Voices," "The Vision of Sin"; and, later, "De Profundis," "Despair," and "Vastness," which sweep the farthest horizons of speculation, and unite scientific knowledge with the simple note of faith. These again may be said to associate themselves through their obtaining purpose, if not through manner or style, with such allegorical, or semi-allegorical, pieces as the "Palace of Art," "The Lotos-Eaters," and "The Voice and the Peak."

Over and above this, Lord Tennyson has so completely and effectively sketched many of the characteristic features of English life that, as a painter of manners and of social tendencies merely, he would have secured a place in the front rank of poets. We think of such poems as "The May Queen" (in which a simple subject full of gaiety and gentle humour at the outset, by dint of his fancy and imagination, becomes tinted with the finest lights of pathos), "The Pictures," "The Gardener's Daughter," "The Miller's Daughter," "Dora," "Audley Court," "Edwin Morris," etc. Perhaps we should also name here "The Brook," which combines the element of manners with exquisite nature-pictures, as indeed do others in a lesser degree. "Sea-Dreams" and "Aylmer's Field," have significance in this point of view also, though both cunningly admit features that at first glance are hardly idyllic. And, in a very high sense, we have this element combined with others in "The Princess," which, after all, is one of the very finest studies of some social tendencies and phenomena which poet has ever wrought.

In one and all of these the touch is so subtle and consummate that the sense of decision and strength is apt to be lost in the gladness felt in looking on

the picture. It is so true to nature and to fact, with so careful a regard to perspective and to light and shade, that the simplicity of result sometimes hides the art that has been exercised. As we follow Lord Tennyson, and try to find a pervading spirit in the mass of his work of this class, we are confronted by difficulties arising mainly from the remarkable way in which these studies of English life and manners shade off into poems of more complexity and perfection of structure, entitling them in some cases almost to stand by themselves. Everywhere beyond the power of reproducing what is seen there is amplest evidence of the gift of making the scene interpret what is felt—here a touch is lyrical, there a line or passage is idyllic, till at last we come to the dramatic monologues, in which the genius of the poet has occasionally found the very highest expression.

Broadly, we may say, that arising out of the study of life and manners we have, on the one side, the idyll, on the other, the dramatic portrait, as it is found in "The Northern Farmer," old style; "The Northern Farmer," new style; "The Village Wife"; "The Grandmother"; "The Northern Cobbler"; "Rizpah," and others, though the two last named shade off more and more into the study of a mood, exceptional and morbid, it may be; but with the precise dramatic quality that stimulates Lord Tennyson's imagination. Perhaps here we should also have mentioned "St. Simeon Stylites."

Then we have the Ballad of Action, as seen in "The Revenge," "Columbus," "The Voyage of Maeldune," "The Defence of Lucknow," and others of this class. Standing in sharp contrast to these again, and only with one point of relation to them,

that is, something of common heroic purpose, we have that wonderful gallery of classic studies or reproductions, in which subtlety of thought and keen analysis go hand in hand with the most exquisite sense of form—not a touch, not a phrase, but heightens the impression—and such a reserve, economy of means, power to give effect to knowledge, and gracefully to suggest instead of for a moment indulging in the kind of detail which scholars are but too apt to affect. We need but to name “Ulysses,” “Tithonus,” “Tiresias,” “Ænone,” “Demeter and Persephone,” and “Lucretius.” Then there is the circle of Arthurian studies, including not only the later idylls, but the earlier studies which stand to these very much as little cabinet pictures stand to frescoes,—“Guinevere and Lancelot,” “Galahad,” “St. Agnes’ Eve,” and others.

Then there are poems of reflection, like “The Deserted House”; and poems of fancy, like the “Sea-Fairies”; poems partly reflective, partly descriptive, partly fanciful, like “The Dream of Fair Women”; and many poems that can best be described as metaphysico-allegorical, like “The Palace of Art,” “The Voice and the Peak,” and others; purely romantic ballads, like “Lady Clare,” and “The Lord of Burleigh”; ballads of present-time heroism and patriotism, like the “Charge of the Light Brigade,” and the “Charge of the Heavy Brigade”; and poems of sentiment and humour, like the “The Dying Swan” and “A Dirge” on the one hand, and “Amphion” and “Will Waterproof’s Lyrical Monologue” on the other.

Then there are the songs—dewdrops of music and harmony, mirroring a heaven, with all its hues,

which prove that if the songs too much favoured in society are often thin and poor, this is not because we have not a great song-writer in the Laureate. Who that read them could ever forget—

“Sweet and low, sweet and low
Wind of the Western Sea,”

or—

“The splendour falls on castle walls,
And snowy summits old in story.”

or—

“Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,”

or the ever memorable lyrical stanzas, “Crossing the Bar.”

Then again there are the Court-poems—some of which as the dedication of the Poems to the Queen, the dedication of the Idylls to the Prince Consort, the epilogue to the Idylls—“To the Queen,” which have the individual note and quality in measure beyond these, of any Court-poems ever written. Standing between these and the more purely national poems, we have the “Ode on the Death of Wellington,” full of lines and phrases which have become as truly common property as the oft-quoted lines of Shakespeare or Milton. And there are the dramas properly so-called.

We have made this little hurried circuit in the outset simply to recall to our readers the variety and width of range in the Laureate’s work, and to show how difficult it is in face of such variety satisfactorily to classify and arrange so as to make a running criticism in short compass clear and explicit.

Mr. Arthur Innes has well said :—

“In each of these three fields then—the elegy, the idyll, and the song [in our idea, he should have

added the ballad and the dramatic monologue]—Tennyson has done work which would place him among the great masters of the craft. Gray is commonly reckoned among our leading poets, mainly on the strength of a single achievement in one only of those fields. It has been said that the ‘Elegy’ is a greater poem than ‘In Memoriam,’ inasmuch as it appeals to simpler and more universal emotions. It would seem reasonable to reply that, by parity of reasoning, ‘Break, break, break,’ or ‘Crossing the Bar,’ is a greater poem than Gray’s ‘Elegy,’ and ‘Hush-a-bye, Baby,’ than any of them.”

One whole section, and a very interesting and beautiful section, of the poems we have not mentioned in our brief review, because the poems composing it might be distributed under several of the different heads we have suggested. These are the poems which may be classed as reproducing the feelings of childhood and youth :—

“When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy ;
And the tide of time flowed back with me—
The forward-flowing tide of time.”

Perhaps most people would agree that “The Recollections of the Arabian Nights” should be placed at the head of this section, with its exquisite grace of picture ; its dreamy atmosphere overcharged with the aroma of eastern climes ; its wealth of inlaid jewellery of phrase so finely corresponding to the impression. Let us join the poet for a moment in midst of his romantic journeyings through the bowers and halls of the great Haroun Alraschid :—

“Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.

From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rillels musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountains flow
Fall'n silver chiming, seemed to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

"Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vari-coloured shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odour in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid."

"The Lady of Shalott" might be classed here, and probably also some would prefer to place here "A Dream of Fair Women," with its "enchanted reverie" and delicate, as well as powerfully outlined, pictures; and certainly that exquisite, almost magical, reproduction of youthful phantasy and shadowy beauty—"The Day-Dream."¹

A whole section of poems, indeed, demands notice here—poems in which there obtains the kind of

¹ Miss Agnes Repplier, in an article on "The Children's Poets" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March 1892, after citing the stanza from "The Lady of Shalott" beginning: "She left the web, she left the loom," says: "Here is the mystic note that childhood loves; and here, too, is the sweet constraint of linked rhymes that makes music for its ears. How many of us can remember well our early joy in this poem, which was but as another and more exquisite fairy tale, ranking fitly with Andersen's 'Little Mermaid' and 'Undine,' and all stories of unhappy lives."

distant and vague ideal which is powerfully attractive to youth by virtue perhaps of this very vagueness. Here we should have to emphasise the most striking portions of "Locksley Hall":—

"Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;

Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

"Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

"Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,

And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

"Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,

And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips."

We have no space to set forth here our notion of certain resemblances in the original conception of the dramatic characters of the heroes of "Locksley Hall" and of "Maud," as well as very striking contrasts, but the fine passage in "Maud," after the picture of the cedar sighing for Lebanon,—

"In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East," and the confession of the hero, of the change in him that the mere sight of Maud ministers, is of the very essence of purifying youthful love, as the Laureate has set it forth in "Guinevere"—

"for indeed I knew

Of no more subtle master under heaven

Than is the maiden passion for a maid,

Not only to keep down the base in man,

But teach high thought, and amiable words

And courtliness, and the desire of fame,

And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

He is now, to quote Maud,—

“no more so all forlorn
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand
A sad astrology, the boundless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,

* * * *

“But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The counter-charm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness, and would die
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

“Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald trembles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.”

It has been said that in the two “Locksley Halls” you see that the tendency to deal with a mood of mind has issued perhaps somewhat too definitely in attenuating such definite links of personal character, as even time could not efface, and such as would have sufficed to maintain an aspect of dramatic unity. “Locksley Hall” has found a continuation, but even yet, it is urged, it is hardly dramatically completed. The ultra-pessimistic curmudgeon of “Fifty Years After” will not, from the artistic point of view, quite connect himself dramatically with the young hero of the first poem, except, indeed, on one ground—that of egotism. Youth and old age seem to be almost exclusive of each other, and there is no real tie between them. They are hardly so much the same being in different moods as two studies of passing moods of what are really different ages. Even as regards mellow metres, it is held, that the

second "Locksley Hall" is comparatively limited. Surely, say these critics, it is not too much to say that in it we have hardly anything like these stanzas for music.

"Many a night, from yonder ivied casement ere I went to rest,

Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

"Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,

Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

"Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime

With the fairy tales of science and the long result of Time :

"When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;

When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

"When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;

Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be."

But against this view we must set the line in

"Sixty Years After"—

"Aged eyes may take the glimmer for the gleam withdrawn,"

and his repeated cries of "Forward, forward."

It needs also to be emphasised that in either case the utterances are to be regarded as strictly dramatic ; the poet is not committed to any opinion put into the mouth either of the young man or the old ; and though, of course, the question remains about artistic consistency, it is open to urge the existence of certain subtle links and associations summed up in unexpected phrases and turns of thought.

Everywhere in Tennyson's poems we have the most suggestive little vignettes—studies of nature with a bright gleam of higher light thrown over them ; for Lord Tennyson, though he is in certain

aspects a poet of nature, would not even at the very outset allow himself to subordinate altogether human interest to nature picture. In his earlier years he had given himself a very careful training in the art of making nature give effect, as though symbolically, to human experience, passion, or emotion—a tendency which may have had something to do with his desire to exhibit moods—whether airy or gloomy—rather than to attempt to reproduce, connectedly, complicated characters. In some measure this will hold of all the early portrait studies of female types—"Airy, fairy Lilian," Adeline, Margaret, Eleanor, and the rest—experiments in certain directions in producing, as it were, typical portraits rather than portraits of persons, strictly speaking. This is most prominently seen, perhaps, in the two "*Marianas*," where the outward picture so fully interprets the mood. Two stanzas—one from each of the poems—will, perhaps, suffice to show what we mean:—

I.

"Dreaming, she knew it was a dream :
She felt he was, and was not there.
She woke : the babble of the stream
Fell, and, without, the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusky white ;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward than at night or morn,
'Sweet Mother, let me not here alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

II.

"Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow ;

The cock sung out an hour ere light ;
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her ; without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange :
She only said, ' The day is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said :
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead.' "

As a painter of nature Tennyson not only perceives the general effect, but the effective points of detail to express it. He knows precisely what is needed to produce the result—to heighten the impression, and decisively holds his hand when this is achieved, with the finest art of suggestion. And he is never vague: it is as though he has seen and remembers clearly. He will not allow abstract ideas of liberty, or fraternity, or even of beauty to carry him away, as sometimes they did Wordsworth in his "Excursion," to the deep injury of his field of picture, and, especially in the end, leading to mere philosophical moralising, and occasionally passing into vague prophecy; nor, like Shelley, does he beat the rarified wind above till he feels faint, palpitating, and agitated in the effort at higher flight. In his moments of highest inspiration he walks the earth, and is still able clearly to observe, and note, and compare. Hence, in combination, a note of common-sense sanity, clear, lofty thought, and true poetic phantasy. From this point of view, it might not be improper to cite here a few lines from the "Lotos-Eaters," though here, as elsewhere, human emotion is so commingled with nature that hardly shall we be able to abstract and view them apart, and in this lies the proof of the poet's power, and his lucidity in treating

themes that would of themselves tempt to mystic cloudiness :—

“A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke,
 Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go ;
 And some thro’ wavering lights and shadows broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
 From the inner land : far-off, three mountain-tops,
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset-flushed ; and, dew’d with showery drops,
 Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

“The charmed sunset lingered low adown
 In the red West ; thro’ mountain clefts the dale
 Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
 Border’d with palm, and many a winding vale
 And meadow, set with slender galingale :
 A land where all things always seemed the same !
 And round about the keel with faces pale,
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

*

*

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7

“There is sweet music here that softer falls
 Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
 Or night-dews on still waters between walls
 Of shadowy granite in a gleaming pass,
 Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
 Than tir’d eyelids upon tir’d eyes,
 Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
 skies.”

“The Confessions of a Second-rate Sensitive Mind,” might be cited as a yet more conclusive illustration of this point.

With other qualities, which it would not be easy to separate and celebrate, we have this combination very skilfully presented in some of the stanzas of the famous poem “Ænone,” yet with the true Greek simplicity of outline and atmosphere : —

"O, mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :
'The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
'The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead. ²
'The purple flower droops ; the golden bee
Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love ;
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life."

"Enoch Arden," though it might be held to depend for interest on the story, which is so simply told, yet in such glowing and effective metre, admirably illustrates this power, especially in the description of Enoch's island :—

"The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvuluses
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world ;
All these he saw ; but what he fain had seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
'The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
'The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
'The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,

² In former editions was not the latter half of this line "and the cicada sleeps"—an expression we should be inclined to prefer ; though there might be critical reasons against it, the music suffers a little by the correction.

A shipwreck'd sailor waiting for a sail :
 No sail from day to day, but every day
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
 Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;
 The blaze upon his island overhead ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;
 Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,
 The hollow-bellowing ocean, and again
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise,—but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,
 So still, the golden lizard on him paused,
 A phantom made of many phantoms moved
 Before him, haunting him or he himself
 Moved haunting people, things and places, known
 Far in a darker isle beyond the line :
 The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
 The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
 The peacock yew-tree and the lonely Hall,
 The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
 November dawns and dewy-glooming downs,
 The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,
 And the low moan of leaden-colour'd seas."

That the Laureate is fertile in this kind of effect is one of the great secrets of his power. His classical reproductions abound in such unexpected touches, and gain a sense of reality and life from them. How effective from this cause the first lines of "Tithonus" :—

"The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
 The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
 Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
 And after many a summer dies the swan.
 Me only cruel immortality
 Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms,
 Here at the quiet limit of the world,
 A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a dream
 The ever-silent spaces of the East,
 Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn."

Whole sections of "In Memoriam" are so fulfilled of this fine light that they may be said to lighten up the whole, even where the poem passes into subtilties of thought that sometimes for the many, at all events, need the aid of the commentator. Here is one of the most striking instances :—

"'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

"'Tis little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

* * * *

"The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'd heart that beat no more ;
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave,

"There twice a day the Severn fills ;
The salt sea-water rushes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

"The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song."

"The Dream of Fair Women" presents picture after picture highly illustrative of our statement. Here is one :—

"Growths of jasmine turn'd
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd
The red anemone.

"I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew
Leading from lawn to lawn.

“The smell of violets, hidden in the green
Pour’d back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.”

And surely we might well claim the amplest
support to our position from the powerful picture of—

“The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went along
From Mizpah’s tower’d gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song” ;

who—

“ ‘Saw God divide the night with flying flame
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
A solemn scorn of ills.

“ ‘When the next moon was roll’d into the sky
Strength came to me that equall’d my desire,—
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire !

“ ‘It comforts me in this one thought to dwell
That I subdued me to my father’s will ;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell
Sweetens the spirit still.

“ ‘Moreover, it is written that my race
Hew’d Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth !’ Here her face
Glow’d, as I looked at her.

“She lock’d her lips ; she left me where I stood :
‘Glory to God,’ she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood
Toward the morning-star.”

Here we have a truly dramatic effect developed out of a simple picture, as it were—the poet rises with his theme, becomes possessed by it, and you feel with Jephthah’s daughter in the grandeur of her resolve and solemn joy, as well as see her move

through the "sombre boskage of the wood." So with at least other two of the Fair Women whom we are made to see and feel for. This is one of the highest triumphs of art.

For "The Palace of Art" the same compactness of general structure can hardly be claimed, but some of the separate pictures are quite as lucid and finished. Here is the proof :—

"Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did pass,
Well-pleased, from room to room.

"Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

"One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land
Lit with a low large moon.

"One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall,
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves
Beneath the windy wall.

"And one a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow streaks of rain.

* * * * *

"And one a foreground black with stones and slags,
Beyond, a line of heights, and higher,
All barr'd with long white cloud the scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

“And one an English home—gray twilight pour’d
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.
“Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern was there
Not less than truth design’d.”

Even in the poems of nature, strictly so-called, the Laureate cannot content himself without finding in nature’s voices the suggestion or echo of those of human nature. As specimens, take the beautiful series of studies—“The Progress of Spring.” There we have various suggestive similitudes rising in directness, till at last the seventh section ends with the words :—

“A hateful voice he utter’d and alarms
Sounding ‘To arms ! to arms !’ ”

Then the ninth begins thus :—

“A simpler, saner lesson might he learn
Who reads thy gradual process, Holy Spring.
Thy leaves possess the season in their turn,
And in their time thy warblers rise on wing.
How surely glidest thou from March to May,
And changest, breathing it, the sullen wind ;
Thy scope of operation, day by day,
Larger and fuller, like the human mind.”

“The Idylls of the King” reveal so many qualities ; power of narrative, invention, commanding pictures, lofty conceptions of the knightly character, imaginative realism, delicate phantasy, and ability to deal with contrasted characters, that no series of epithets could do them justice. The triumph of the poet lies in the way in which he finds and follows a master idea that suffices to lead him naturally to the climax,

in each of the separate idylls, as well as in the whole. Not only is the story well told, with the nicest attention to secondary incident and touches of character, but with such a constant attention to the climax that, in all cases, something of dramatic effect is gained, yet without any marked disturbance of the general idyllic tone. The fall of Queen Guinevere and the rebellion of Modred suggest the most striking situations. Nothing could be more truly dramatic than the interview between King Arthur and the Queen in the abbey, and the picture of the Queen when he had left her after that remarkable speech in which he tenders her his full forgiveness as she grovels at his feet. It is night, and not a little of the effect is due to dark and shadow, as the kingly figure vanishes :—

“ Then, listening till those armed steps were gone,
Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish found
The casement : ‘ peradventure,’ so she thought,
‘ If I might see his face and not be seen.’
And lo, he sat on horseback at the door !
And near him the sad nuns with each a light
Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,
To guard and foster her for evermore.
And while he spake to these his helm was lower’d,
To which for crest the golden dragon clung
Of Britain ; so she did not see the face
Which then was as an angel’s, but she saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the lights,
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.
And even then he turn’d ; and more and more
The moony vapour rolling round the King,
Who seem’d the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray,
And grayer till himself became as mist
Before her moving ghost-like to his doom.

Then she stretched out her arms and cried aloud,
 'Oh Arthur!' there her voice brake suddenly,
 Then—as a stream that spouting from a cliff
 Fails in mid air, but gathering at the base
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the vale—
 Went on in passionate utterance.

'Gone—my lord!

Gone thro' my sin to slay, and to be slain!
 And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
 Farewell! I should have answer'd his farewell.
 His mercy choked me. . . .

I cannot kill my sin,
 If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;
 No, nor by living can I live it down.
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
 The months will add themselves and make the years,
 The years will roll into the centuries,
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn. . . .

I thought I could not breathe in that fine air,
 That pure severity of perfect light—
 I wanted warmth and colour which I found
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,
 Thou art the highest and most human too,
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so late?
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle?—None:
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,
 But now it were too daring. Ah, my God!
 What might I not have made of thy fair world,
 Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
 It was my duty to have loved the highest:
 It surely was my profit had I known:
 It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
 We needs must love the highest, when we see it,
 Not Lancelot, nor another.' ”

There are two classes of critics who approach Lord Tennyson from the point of view of mere thought, in one way or other desiring a definite scheme of life and society. In either way they err; the proper point of approach to a great poet is not

directly by way of systematic thought, either as brought to him or as sought in him ; but rather by the way of sensuo-imaginative receptivity and the sense of enjoyment, in the higher meaning of the phrase. After due impression in this respect much else may follow ; indeed, all may follow, but this must be first. The poet, so far as he is a thinker, is unsystematic, because, precisely in the measure of his imaginative and lyric impulse, he is unconscious of abstract thought *per se*, lifted above it as on the rise of a tidal-wave, and reaches his ideal of unity and wholeness by quite another process than the logical or intellectual one.

The one class of critics bring out of the Laureate's poems a whole system, metaphysical and social. The "Idylls of the King" becomes with them a semi-metaphysical world-scheme, in which all that is possible to human nature is foreshadowed, more or less clearly or dimly, as they may choose to put it ; and every image comes back weighted, not only with a thought, as Emerson said of the wild flowers, but with a definite and available practical, or moral, suggestion. Dean Alford unfortunately gave a deal of colour to this view of things in his oft-quoted article on the "Idylls" in the *Contemporary Review*, which caused a great deal of talk and discussion at the time ; others again have sought to lessen the claims of the Laureate, because they fail to find in his work what might be called some reflection of their own social and moral theories, or support for them. They would fain reconstruct society after certain ideals, and measure the power and influence of a poet by the amount of support which they fancy they find in him for such objects.

In our idea, all criticism based on such assumptions as these is wrong where it is consistent, and is only right when it is untrue to its starting-point and its principles. It may be true that, as Emerson said in his introduction to the "Gulistan" of Saadi, all questions touching religion and the intellectual problems bound up with it, finally come back to the poet for their answer; but they come back to him because in the last result all such questions find the only practical, as opposed to merely intellectual, solution in emotions, sentiments, and the dim and undefined determinations in many aspects inseparably bound up with these. On these the poet sets the seal of conclusive imagination, and thus recalls the questioner or sceptic to undoubted, practical demands, as well as to the realities of the universal heart and conscience.

Lord Tennyson has spoken in no hesitating terms, in this sense, in "In Memoriam," which, as has been said, gathers up in itself many minor streams, as we might put it, represented by "The Two Voices," "The Vision of Sin," etc., etc., where, if the subject is viewed from one specific point, we assuredly see a preparation for a fuller and more strictly poetic rendering. Science is made tributary: the heart, in its grand declaration "I have felt," asserts in the poet's imagination its superior and final claim; and when we have been raised to this clear consciousness, the work of the poet, as religious influence, has been accomplished. Such poems as "The Ancient Sage," "The Higher Pantheism," "Flower in the Crannied Wall," and others of the same class, are but later incidental reinforcements of the central purpose of "In Memoriam."

It is quite true that, in a sense, Lord Tennyson, by virtue of his very width of range, by his curiosities, and his delicate perception of poetic colour and suggestion, lives much in the past. He has even been likened to a maiden of the middle ages, dreamily brooding over her embroidery frame, absorbed in something vague, though beautiful, and in essence purely romantic. But this, though at first sight apt in view of some phases of his work, is like all images of the kind, perverted and likely to prove misleading. Certainly the Arthurian legend early laid hold on his imagination. Conceptions derived from it colour even his poems which are most distinctively present-day poems. Chivalry in its purest form, as the expression of some of the loftiest notes of human nature, he found to furnish a ready channel through which to pour the wealth of imagination and phantasy. Often the effect is like that of the dim religious light through painted glass; but the light is true: it is only coloured by the medium. The "*In Memoriam*," which in purpose seems so expressly modern and of to-day, and is in its first aim so personal,—lyrical, elegiac—becomes really only another form for the same spirit which we find so dominant in the "*Idylls of the King*"—both celebrate what is to him a great personality, knight-like, but at once near and familiar and far-withdrawn, transfigured. As King Arthur was larger than human on the frozen hills, so of Arthur of the "*In Memoriam*" he can say:—

“ My love has talk’d with rocks and trees ;
He finds on misty mountain-ground
His own vast shadow glory-crown’d.
He sees himself in all he sees.

* * * *

"Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal;
O loved the most when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher ;

* * * *

"Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

"What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
But tho' I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less :

"My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Tho' mixed with God and nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more."

And that remarkable section ciii. of "In Memoriam" has images and touches which cannot but recall much in "The Passing of Arthur."

And the idea is an often recurring one. We can see how the idea of chivalry and knighthood grew. With the Laureate they are not dead : all noble and loftily disinterested is of kin with them. At first, indeed, it was the idea of some supreme spiritual dower, some rapt and lofty inspiration, as in "Galahad" and "St. Agnes' Eve," that caught his imagination—some dreamy all-absorbing devotion to something inwardly realised rather than outwardly perceived. In this Lord Tennyson was true also to youthful tendency and impression, and gave them life. Youth, taken possession of by an idea, is apt to overleap the bounds of earth and sense, and to seek in some dreamy fancy the consistency and unity it fails to find elsewhere—only to return

gradually to find in reality the answers to many needs otherwise neglected.

It was, perhaps, out of the same necessity that King Arthur was first apprehended and presented in his passing; and this circumstance determined of necessity the idyllic rather than dramatic or tragic character of the whole cycle. They are idyllic, in keeping with the final scene in which Arthur wonderfully passes—disappears.

The properly tragic elements of the original legend are refined away—passed into the background; Modred's rebellion is but indicated: the awful causes from which it sprung are left unsuggested, and the tragic results to which it grew are softened so as to harmonise with the idyllic atmosphere in which the whole was at first conceived. The savour of youthful impulse which remains with the Laureate, if it may be said to have limited his range *dramatically*, has distinctly aided in preserving his idyllic fancy, and in intensifying his lyrical perceptions.

The idyllic spirit favours only the view of one mood or impression, or of a limited section, which shall, above all things, be consistent and simple. The Laureate has found his most successful mediums in the idyllic and the lyrical, because his genius is most distinctively idyllic and lyrical. Even where he is most successful with dramatic monologue, as in "The Northern Farmers," old and new; "The Northern Cobbler," "The Grandmother," "The Spinster's Sweet'earts," "The First Quarrel," "Tomorrow," "Rizpah," and the rest, he aims at seizing and presenting the type under one aspect—as under the influence of one definite, and for the nonce limited, experience and concentrated narrowed cur-

rent of feeling. But how faithful he is! Listen to the "Northern Farmer," new style, as he drives along and shapes his thoughts, as it were, in time to the horse's trot :—

"'Proputty, proputty, proputty'—that's what I 'ears 'em saäy;

Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy paäins;

Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braäins."

* * * * *

"Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän a-talkin' o' thee
Thou's beän a-talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it
me,—

Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's
lass,—

Noä,—thou'll marry for luvv—'an we boäth on us thinks
tha an ass.

* * * * *

"Doän't be stunt³—taäke time: I knaws what maäkes
tha sa mad:

Warn't I cräzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?

But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this:

Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is.

* * * * *

"Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass 'an 'er
munny too.

Maäken 'em goä together as they've good right to do.

Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny
laäid by?

Naäy—for I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it—reäson
why.

"Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coats to their backs 'an taäkes their regular
meäls.

Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be
'ad;

Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp
is bad."

Most powerful in certain respects, because most pathetic, is "Rizpah" in the highly dramatic account of the digging with her own hands a grave for the bones of her much-loved boy, who had been hanged for robbing the mail, merely in bold answer to a challenge, and with no idea of theft, and his bones exposed, hung in chains, and her burying of them in consecrated ground. The whole is wrought out with a solemn and direct realism which lays the stronger hold on the reader as he goes, till at the last he can hardly restrain a tear in the profound and unaffected pathos of these concluding lines :—

"Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone to the fire ?

I have been with God in the dark—go, go ! you may leave me alone—

You never have borne a child—you are just as hard as a stone.

"Madam, I beg your pardon ! I think that you mean to be kind,

But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice in the wind—

The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call in the dark,

And he calls me now from the church, and not from the gibbet—for hark !

Nay,—you can hear it yourself—it is coming—shaking the walls—

Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good-night. I am going. He calls."

Some of the lack of availability in the plays for the theatre may perhaps trace itself to this cause—that the characters are somewhat too much conceived under one definitive aspect, and are made

to reveal themselves too much in this. In "Queen Mary" the dominating fear lest Philip's affection should wane in the lack of issue is the all-effective motive. The action is of necessity somewhat hindered by this. A much more superficial view of the character, which allowed more of ready adaptations to special circumstances, would be of more avail for stage purposes, though for chamber study nothing could be more suggestive. On the stage everything must give place to action, or must directly aid it. In Lord Tennyson's case occasionally even the tendency to make the characters recite what are too reminiscent of familiar lines and metres, is not favourable to stage effect, though it has to be said that in this respect "The Falcon" and "The Cup" (which was as real a dramatic success on the stage as "The Foresters" seems to have been in New York), strike us as more effective than the strictly historical plays—"Becket," "Queen Mary," and "Harold," if we can hardly speak so decidedly of "The Promise of May." As illustrative of what we mean here we may venture to cite the speech of Cardinal Pole in "Queen Mary" after his return from Flanders :—

"We had your royal barge, and that same chair,
Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,
The ripples twinkled at their diamond-dance,
The boats that follow'd were as glowing-gay
As regal gardens ; and your flocks of swans
As fair and white as angels ; and your shores
Were in mine eyes the green of Paradise.
My foreign friends, who dream'd us blanketed
In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd
Upon their lake of Garda, fire the Thames ;

Our voyage by sea was all but miracle ;
And here the river flowing from the sea,
Not toward it (for they thought not of our tides),
Seem'd as a happy miracle to make glide—
In quiet—home your banish'd countryman."

In one word, the Laureate's dramas are too distinctively works of art, in which the poet's personality, as a kind of veil, is too decisively projected over some of his characters. Mr. Oscar Wilde has recently tried, and in so far tried successfully, to show that the chances of success with a drama are precisely in the measure in which the playwright has set aside the idea of literary art, and conformed to demand for plot and certain mere stage requirements.

With regard to the sonnet it is, indeed, to us surprising that so great a master of form as Lord Tennyson has not used it more, and used it more successfully. It was the key with which Shakespeare, and Milton, and Wordsworth unlocked their hearts. And this is the more surprising in that Lord Tennyson's genius is on one side of the questioning lyrical order, in which prevails personal sentiment of the very character that demands for its expression just such a form as the sonnet. It has been ingeniously held that the stanza of "In Memoriam" is an adaptation from the sonnet; but, in the poet regarding himself as free to make his sections long or short as suits himself, he gets rid of *the* quality special to the sonnet—that is, the defined return of the wave on itself within a certain regulated circuit or pre-determined round; so that, though "In Memoriam" is one of the most musical and deep-thoughted of poems, it nevertheless conforms strictly to no previous standard, and is formally freer than might seem at

first view. Of the sonnets which we have from the Laureate's hand, to our taste, those are best which are least precise in technical respects. "As when with downcast eyes" is very fine in all that relates to conception and music, but the second part of the octave goes far astray formally; and the same may also be said of "Mine be the Strength of Spirit" and "If I were good, as I desire to be." On the other hand, "The Bridesmaid," "Alexander," and "Poland" (nobly grave and sustained in thought and purpose though it be), show some involution—the wave of thought hardly returns on itself with the clearness and satisfaction we crave—

"Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, disgraced
For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-erased)
Gliding with equal crowns two serpents led
Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed
Ammonian Oasis in the waste.
There in a silent shade of laurel brown
Apart the Chamian Oracle divine
Sheltered his unapproachèd mysteries;
High things were spoken there, unhandèd down;"—

is, in our idea, more fitted to stand as part of a longer poem, where less of strict and simple sequence is demanded, than in the sonnet proper. Perhaps the most perfect of the sonnets is that which prefaces "Harold," headed "Show Day at Battle Abbey, 1876," and ends:

"Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slandered king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago;
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below."

Thus, though we may have among us poets who,

in one respect or other, have shown more fervour, it may be, more passion, more dramatic apprehensiveness, yet, for width of range, for felicity of form, for dreamy fancy, story-telling art, lyrical sweetness, mellow metres, idyllic pictures, power of interpreting manners and seizing the most recondite features of his own time, Lord Tennyson stands absolutely alone, his place unchallenged as his genius is supreme. While other poets show, in one aspect or another, excess or diffuseness, Lord Tennyson has seldom or never erred in this way—he is as faultless in taste as he is rich in impulse; as patient in labour, and assiduously self-critical as he is inventive and original; at once bold in design, and simple in the means he uses to gain his effects. The story of “The Golden Supper,” or “The Lover’s Tale,” in its various changes and appearances, suffices amply to prove this. He stands as the most typical of the poets of his time—likely to hold as high a place in the future of English literature as he does at the present moment—appealing as powerfully to the thinker as to the simple and unlearned.

The main facts of the Laureate’s life have been given in the two brief biographies of his elder brothers, Frederick and Charles. He is the fourth son of the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, LL.D., Rector of Somersby, Lincolnshire, and was born in August 1809. From his earliest boyhood he showed the poetic spirit: as a mere child he wrote verses. He went at an early age to the Louth Grammar School. While yet a youth, in association with his brother Charles, he made his first venture in print in “Poems of Two Brothers,” of the fate of which we have spoken in our sketch of Charles Tennyson

Turner. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of eighteen. Though he had Arthur Henry Hallam for a rival, he took the gold medal at Cambridge for his poem "Timbuctoo."

Leaving the University Tennyson devoted himself entirely to poetry, and has never suffered any other interest in the least to withdraw him from it. His life is thus one of little change or incident: its interest is centred in the works he has given to the world. In June 1850, he married Emily Sarah, daughter of Mr. Henry Sellwood, and sister of Mrs. Charles Tennyson. For many years he resided at Farringford, in the Isle of Wight, but of late years has divided the year between this and the residence he has built on Blackdown, near Haslemere.

He was appointed Poet Laureate on the death of Wordsworth, of whom he thus finely spoke in the Dedication of his poems to Her Majesty:—

"Victoria,—since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that uttered nothing base; . . .

Take, madam, this poor book of song,
For though the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness."

In 1884 he was raised to the peerage under the title of Baron Tennyson, of Aldworth, Sussex, and of Freshwater, Isle of Wight—the only case in which such honour has been conferred for literary services.

It is interesting to know that the poetic gift has descended to Lord Tennyson's sons, both of whom have written pieces of merit. It cannot, we should think, be regarded as an unfitting close to this sketch of the Laureate, or one which he himself would not

approve, if we venture to present here two specimens of their work—"Poems of Two Brothers." The first is a short piece by the late Lionel Tennyson, who died in India in 1885, entitled "Sympathy":—

"In this sad world where mortals must
Be almost strangers,
Should we not turn to those we trust
To save us from its dangers?
Then whisper in mine ear again,
And this believe,
That aught which gives thy dear heart pain
Makes my heart grieve.

"God wills that we have sorrow here,
And we will share it;
Whisper thy sorrow in mine ear
That I may also bear it;
If anywhere our trouble seems
To find an end,
'Tis in the fairy-land of dreams,
Or with a friend."

The second is a sonnet, "Orange-blossom," by Mr. Hallam Tennyson, which appeared anonymously in *Macmillan's Magazine* for March 1885:—

"Far off to sunnier shores he bad us go,
And find him in his labyrinthine maze
Of orange, olive, myrtle,—charmèd ways
Where the gray violet and red wind-flower blow,
And lawn and slope are purple with the glow
Of kindlier climes. There Love shall orb our days,
Or, like the wave that fills those balmy bays,
Pulse through our life and with an ebbless flow;
So now, my dove, but for a breathing while
Fly, let us fly this dearth of song and flower,
And, as we fare together forth alone
From out our winter-wasted Northern isle,
Dream of his rich Mediterranean bower,
Then mix our orange-blossom with his own."

ALEX. H. JAPP.

Arthur Henry Hallam.

1811—1833.

THE fame of Arthur Henry Hallam would be assured by the commemoration he has received in Lord Tennyson's "In Memoriam." Such tributes, however, in most cases are open to the suspicion of loving exaggeration; and beautiful and stately in its movement, and subtle in its melody as "In Memoriam" is, it is well that we can supplement it, in so far, by facts concerning Arthur Henry Hallam and by the study of his own poems and essays. Everywhere these reveal, not only a beautiful soul but a lucid, penetrating intellect: "Alma beata e bella" in very truth. The "In Memoriam," studied alongside of these, becomes to us more and more a faithful record, not only of the poet's sorrow and regret, but of the subject's remarkable gifts and graces; and thus gathers a double value as it is seen and read in the light of biography and poems.

Arthur H. Hallam was born in Bedford Place, London, on February 1st, 1811, so that he was more than a year younger than the Laureate. He was the son of the celebrated Henry Hallam the historian; and soon gave such tokens of intellectual gifts as delighted his father's heart. While yet a child, he had put aside childish things—at all events childish books, and formed a love for those which are usually sought after only by scholars and

students. Before he was eight years old, he had spent some time with his parents in Germany and Switzerland, and had become familiar with French which he could also read with ease. Before twelve months had elapsed he was expert in Latin; and already had begun to exercise himself in dramatic poetry, having produced many pieces of remarkable merit.

In 1820, he was placed with the Rev. W. Carmalt at Putney, and from there proceeded to Eton in 1822. He might have become a great classical scholar, had he not at an early period been carried away by a love of philosophy and general literature—the old English dramatists having attracted his attention and absorbed much of his time even before he had left Eton. Like De Quincey, he was early laid hold of by a conviction of the surpassing greatness of our own literature. In 1827 he began to contribute to the *Eton Miscellany*—wrote in it some papers in prose, a story in verse, and many shorter poems. On leaving Eton in 1827, he spent some eight months with his parents in Italy—a sojourn which was profitable in several ways. Not only did he, with his usual quickness in acquiring languages, perfect himself in Italian, but then began that study of the great Italian poets which remained a joy and a solace for him to the end. His Italian sonnets prove at once his mastery of the language, and his appropriation of the spirit of the masters. Dante was his poet, par excellence. It is remarked in his memoir that “no poet was more congenial to the character of his own reflective mind; in none other could he so abundantly find that disdain of flowery redundance, that perpetual reference of the

sensible to the ideal, that inspiration for somewhat better and less fleeting than earthly things, to which his inmost soul responded." But his interest in philosophy and art was never lessened by his growing devotion to poetry.

He returned to England in June 1828, and in October, went to Trinity College, Cambridge. He had already so thoroughly given his sympathies to certain lines of study that, though by effort he might have become an expert mathematician, and easily mastered problems, yet, as he did not care to dwell on and retain them in his memory, it is no wonder that he failed to become a first-class mathematician. In the first year of his residence, symptoms of ill-health made themselves felt, and some limitation of the field of study was forced upon him.

But if his lines of study were restricted, his sources of enjoyment and intellectual exercise grew. He now formed new relationships, stimulating, inspiring—one in especial, which can never be forgotten. Alfred Tennyson and he became bosom friends. If, as the Laureate sings in one of the most beautiful sections in "*In Memoriam*," he saw in Arthur Hallam powers which exceeded his own, so that he was ever learning¹ from him, Arthur Hallam saw also the power and

1 As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to someone of his race :
So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below
Thy kindred with the great of old.

the promise of greatness in his friend. On one occasion when he had accompanied Tennyson to his native home, he remarked of the house that "many in future times would make pilgrimages to it, to behold where a great poet was born,"—which attests a remarkable insight in so forecasting a companion's future.

Arthur Hallam left Cambridge on taking his degree in 1832, and entered himself at the Inner Temple, with scarce any idea that he should practise law, but to meet the wishes of his father. Lord Tennyson's reference to the "dusty purlieus of the law" is thus justified. From the latter part of his residence in Cambridge his health had greatly improved, with a consequent access of cheerfulness and activity in many lines of effort. But in the spring of 1833 he had an attack of influenza which weakened him, and may have disposed his constitution to the shock that before long came. He accompanied his father into Germany in August of that year, and in returning to Vienna from Pesth, a wet day probably gave him a slight fever, which had apparently subsided, when a sudden rush of blood to the head ended his life on September 15th, 1833.

Sir Francis Doyle, in his "Reminiscences," has given fuller details than his father made known in the memoir from which we have drawn the facts :—

"His death was a very sad one, and has left behind it in many hearts a sorrow not to be put aside. As a boy he had suffered much at intervals from serious headaches. His Eton and Cambridge friends, naturally enough, thought them headaches and nothing more, but when the end came it was made clear that his life had been a long struggle against incurable

organic disease. A severe bout of influenza weakened him, and whilst he was travelling abroad for change of air, and to recover his strength, one of his usual attacks apparently returned upon him without warning, while he was still unfitted to resist it, so that when his poor father came back from a walk through the streets of Vienna, he was lying dead on the sofa where he had been left to take a short rest. Mr. Hallam sat down to write his letters, and it was only by slow and imperceptible degrees that a certain anxiety, in consequence of Arthur's stillness and silence, dawned upon his mind : he drew near to ascertain why he had not moved or spoken, and found that all was over."

His remains were brought to England, and interred on January 3rd, 1834, in the chancel of Clevedon Church, belonging to his maternal grandfather, Sir Abraham Elton : a lovely spot hanging on the side of a hill overlooking the Bristol Channel.

"The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'd heart that beat no more :
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

* * * * *

'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid ;
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land."

Arthur Hallam's poems, we are told by his father, were intended to be published along with those of his friend, Alfred Tennyson. They would have been worthy of the association. If, on account of his youth, Arthur Hallam had not fashioned any one great work, there is abundant promise of greatness had life been allowed him. He has learned the

power of simplicity; he has reached to Dante's secret, and already knows how to suggest by reserve of language. Some of his sonnets are very perfect—full of melody; and hardly could you either add to, or take away from them. He sees clearly, and his expression is adequate; he will allow no redundancy. This is a rare quality in one so young, indicating many other qualities. It is very remarkable that the Italian sonnets show as decisively as the English ones this self-restraint and true concentration. As a critic he was well-equipped: his essays are not only remarkable as having been written by a youth, but are remarkable in themselves. Some of the sentences in the "Extracts from a Review of Tennyson's Poems" as felicitously define the Laureate's remarkable qualities of thought, of melody, of metre, as the essays of almost any later critic have done; whilst the "Oration on the Italian Imaginative Writers" is full of insight and luminous expression, free utterly from any trace of pedantry or affectation. Arthur Hallam was not only gifted, a genius and a poet, but he almost seems to have known nothing of that intermediate period of vague and misty aspiration, of which the poet Keats so pathetically speaks in the Preface to "Endymion."

ALEX. H. JAPP.

MEDITATIVE FRAGMENTS

IN BLANK VERSE.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

I.

(11.)

A VALLEY—and a stream of purest white
Trailing its serpent form within the breast
Of that embracing dale—three sinuous hills
Imminent in calm beauty, and trees thereon,
Crest above crest, uprising to the noon,
Which dallies with their topmost tracery,
Like an old playmate, whose soft welcomings
Have less of ardour, because more of custom.
It is an English scene : and yet methinks,
Did not yon cottage dim with azure curls
Of vapour the bright air, and that neat fence
Gird in the comfort of its quiet walls,
Or did not yon gay troop of carollers
Press on the passing breeze a native rhyme,
I might have deem'd me in a foreign land.
For, as I gaze, old visions of delight,
That died with th' hour their parent, are reflected
From the mysterious mirror of the mind,
Mingling their forms with these, which I behold.
Nay the old feelings in their several states
Come up before me, and entwine with these
Of younger birth in strangest unity.
And yet who bade them forth ? Who spake to Time,
That he should strike the fetters from his slaves ?
Or hath he none ? Is the drear prison house,
To which, 'twould seem, our spiritual acts

Pass one by one, a phantom—a dim mist,
Enveloping our sphere of agency ?
A guess, which we do hold for certainty ?
I do but mock me with these questionings.
Dark, dark, yea, “irrecoverably dark,”
Is the soul’s eye : yet how it strives and battles
Through th’ impenetrable gloom to fix
That master light, the secret truth of things,
Which is the body of the infinite God !

II.

(1v.)

I lay within a little bowered nook,
With all green leaves, nothing but green around me,
And through their delicate comminglings flashed
The broken light of a sunned waterfall—
Ah, water of such freshness, that it was
A marvel and an envy ! There I lay,
And felt the joy of life for many an hour.
But when the revel of sensations
Gave place to meditation and discourse,
I waywardly began to moralise
That little theatre with its watery scene
Into quaint semblances of higher things.
And first methought that twined foliage
Each leaf from each how different, yet all stamped
With common hue of green, and similar form,
Pictured in little the great human world.
Sure we are leaves of one harmonious bower,
Fed by a sap, that never will be scant,
All-permeating, all-producing mind ;
And in our several parcellings of doom
We but fulfil the beauty of the whole.

Oh madness ! if a leaf should dare complain
Of its dark verdure, and aspire to be
The gayer, brighter thing that wantons near.
Then as I looked
On the pure presence of that tumbling stream
Pure amid thwarting stones and staining earth,
Oh Heaven ! methought how hard it were to find
A human bosom of such stubborn truth,
Yet tempered so with yielding courtesy.
Then something rose within my heart to say—
“ Maidenly virtue is the beauteous face
Which this clear glass gives out so prettily :
Maidenly virtue born of privacy,
Lapt in a still conclusion and reserve ;
Yet, when the envious winter-time is come
That kills the flaunting blossoms all arow,
If that perforce her steps must be abroad
Keeps, like that stream, a queenly haviour
Free from all taint of that she treads upon ;
And like those hurrying atoms in their fall,
A maiden’s thoughts may dare the eye of day
To look upon their sweet sincerity.”
With that I struck into a different strain :—
“ O ye wild atomies, whose headlong life
Is but an impulse and coaction,
Whose course hath no beginning, no, nor end ;
Are ye not weary of your mazed whirls,
Your tortuous deviations, and the strife
Of your opposed bubblings ? Are there not
In you as in all creatures, quiet moods,
Deep longings for a slumber and a calm ?
I never saw a bird was on the wing
But with a homeward joy he seem’d to fly
As knowing all his toil’s o’er-paid reward

Was with his chirpers in their little nest.
Pines have I seen on Jura's misty height
Swinging amid the whirl-blasts of the North,
And shaking their old heads with laugh prolonged,
As if they joyed to share the mighty life
Of elements—the freedom, and the stir.
But when the gale was past, and the rent air
Returned, and the piled clouds rolled out of view,
How still th' interminable forest then !
Soundless, but for the myriad forest flies,
That hum a busy little life away
I' th' amplitude of those unstartled glades.
Why what a rest was there ! But ye, oh ye !
Poor aliens from the fixed vicissitudes,
That alternate throughout created things,
Mocked with incessantness of motion,
Where shall ye find or changement or repose ?
So spake I in the fondness of my mood.
But thereat Fancy sounded me a voice
Borne upward from that sparkling company :
“ Repinement dwells not with the duteous free.
We do the Eternal Will ; and in that doing,
Subject to no seducement or oppose,
We owe a privilege, that reasoning man
Hath no true touch of.” At that reproof the tears
Flushed to mine eyes ; and I arose, and walked
With a more earnest and reverent heart
Forth to the world, which God had made so fair,
Mired now with trails of error and of sin.

WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF THE TAY.

July 1829.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

I SAW a child upon a Highland moor
Playing with heath-flowers in her game some mood,
And singing snatches wild of Gaelic lore
That thrilled like witch-notes my susceptible blood.
I spake a Southern word, but not the more
Did she regard or move from where she stood.
It seemed the business of her life to play
With euphrasies and bluebells day by day.

Then my first thought was of the joy to grow
With her, and like her, as a mountain plant,
That to one spot attached doth bud and blow,
Then, in the rains of autumn, leaves to vaunt
Its fragrance to the air, and sinks, till low
Winter consign it, like a satiate want,
To the earth's endearment, who will fondly nourish
The loosed substance, until spring reflowerish.

"To be thy comrade, and thy brother, maiden,
To chant with thee the antique song I hear :
Joying the joy that looks not toward its fading,
The sweet philosophy of young life's cheer !
We should be like two bees with honey laden,
Or two blithe butterflies a rose-tree near !"—
So I went dreaming how to play a child
Once more with her who 'side me sang and smiled.

Then a stern knowledge woke along my soul,
And sudden I was sadly made aware
That childish joy is now a folded scroll,
And new ordainments have their several fair :
When evening lights press the ripe greening knoll
True heart will never wish the morning there :
Where arched boughs enlace the golden light,
Did ever poet pray for franchised sight.

When we were children, we did sigh to reach
The eminence of a man ; yet in our thought,
And in the prattled fancies of our speech,
It was a baby man we fashioned out ;
And now that childhood seems the only leech
For all the heartaches of a rough world caught,
Sooth is, we wish to be a twofold thing,
And keep our present self to watch within.

STANZAS.

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING MELROSE ABBEY IN COMPANY
OF SIR WALTER SCOTT,

August 1829.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

I LIVED an hour in fair Melrose ;
It was not when "the pale moonlight"
Its magnifying charm bestows ;
Yet deem I that I "viewed it right."
The wind-swept shadows fast careered
Like living things that joyed or feared,
Adown the sunny Eildon Hill,
And the sweet winding Tweed the distance crowned
well.

I inly laughed to see that scene
Wear such a countenance of youth,
Though many an age those hills were green,
And yonder river glided smooth,
Ere in these now disjointed walls
The Mother Church held festivals,
And full-voiced anthemings the while
Swelled from the choir, and lingered down the
echoing aisle.

I coveted that Abbey's doom ;
For if I thought the early flowers
Of our affection may not bloom,
Like those green hills through countless hours,
Grant me at least a tardy waning,
Some pleasure still in age's paining ;
Though lines and forms must fade away,
Still may old Beauty share the empire of Decay !

But looking toward the grassy mound
Where calm the Douglas chieftains lie,
Who living, quiet never found,
I straightway learnt a lesson high :
For there an old man sat serene,
And well I knew that thoughtful mien
Of him whose early lyre had thrown
Over these mould'ring walls the magic of its tone.

Then ceased I from my envying state
And knew that aweless intellect
Hath power upon the ways of fate,
And works through time and space unchecked.
That minstrel of old chivalry
In the cold grave must come to be,
But his transmitted thoughts have part
In the collective mind, and never shall depart.

It was a comfort too to see
Those dogs that from him ne'er would rove,
And always eyed him rev'rently
With glances of depending love.
They know not of that eminence
Which marks him to my reasoning sense ;
They know but that he is a man,
And still to them is kind, and glads them all he can.

And hence their quiet looks confiding,
Hence grateful instincts seated deep,
By whose strong bond, were ill betiding,
They'd risk their own his life to keep.
What joy to watch in lower creature
Such dawning of a moral nature,
And how (the rule of things obey)
They look to a higher mind to be their law and stay !

LINES

SPOKEN IN THE CHARACTER OF PYGMALION. WRITTEN
ON THE OCCASION OF A REPRESENTED CHARADE.

1832.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

'TIS done, the work is finished—that last touch
Was as a God's! Lo! now it stands before me,
Even as long years ago I dreamed of it,
Consummate offspring of consummate art;
Ideal form itself! Ye Gods, I thank you,
That I have lived to this: for this thrown off
The pleasure of my kind; for this have toiled
Days, nights, months, years;—am not I recompensed?
Who says an artist's life is not a king's?
I *am* a king, alone among the crowd
Of busy hearts and looks—apart with nature
I sit, a God upon the earth, creating
More lovely forms than flesh and blood can equal.
Jove's workmanship is perishable clay,
But mine immortal marble; when the proudest
Of our fair city dames is laid i' the dust
This creature of my soul will still be lovely.
Let me contemplate thee again. That lip—
How near it wears the crimson! and that eye—
How strives it with the marble's vacancy!
Methinks if thou wert human, I could love thee;
But that thou art not, nor wilt ever be—
Ne'er know and feel how beautiful thou art.
Oh God, I am alone then—she hears not—
And yet how like to life! Ha—blessed thought,

Gods have heard prayers ere now. Hear me, bright
Venus,
Queen of my dreams, hear from thy throne of light,
Forgive the pride that made my human heart
Forget its nature. Let her live and love !
I dare not look again—my brain swims round—
I dream—I dream—even now methought she moved—
If 'tis a dream, how will I curse the dawn
That wakes me from it ! There—that bend again—
It is no dream—Oh, speak to me and bless me.

SCENE AT ROME.

1832.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

RAFFAELLE *sitting in his Studio* ; FIAMMETTA *enters*.

R. Dearest, I wished for thee a moment gone
And lo, upon the wish thou art here.

F. Perhaps
It was thy wish that even now as I entered,
Gleamed thro' the citron shadow, like a star beam,
One star beam of some high predominant star.

R. Why, little trifler, whither hast thou been
That thou return'st so fair fantastical ?

F. Down by the fountain, where the dark cool alley
Yields into sudden light of cooler spray.
It is a noble evening—one to shame thee—
For the least hue of that all-coloured heaven
Bears a more full and rich divinity
Than the best touch thy pencil ever gave,—
Thou smilest at me.

R. Rather should I sigh
To think that while I learn to love thee better,
And better prize all that belongs to thee,
In the fair company I live with always,
The tempting faces, and warm, loving shapes
That make my little room a paradise,
Thou wandering about, from lighted fountains,
From groves at twilight full of changing magic,
Or yon great gallery picture hung with stars,
Gatherest contempt for that poor mimic thing,
An artist.

F. Thou believest not thy words,
Else could I call a thousand witnesses
To swear me into innocence again.

R. Where are they?

F. Out alas! I had forgot—
I have them not—I know not where they dwell;
They roam in a dim field I may not come to,
Nor ever see them more; yet were they once
Familiar beings, inward to my soul
As is the life blood to the life.

R. The answer—
We have the riddle, who are these unkind ones
Who knew the thing it is to be beside thee,
Looked on thy face, yet had the hearts to leave thee?

F. Oh there you are mistaken—you are too quick—
They had no eyes, and could not see my face—
They had no power to stay—they must have left me—
Each in his turn stood on the downleft edge
Of a most mighty river, stood and fell,
Borne to the silent things that are no more.

R. Are they then dead?

F. Ay, dead; entombed within
A glorious sepulchre, to whose broad space
The world of present things is but an atom.
There they lie dead, and here I'd weep for them,
But that I have a fairy mirror by me
Shews me their spirits, pale and beautiful
With a sweet mournful beauty.

R. Thou art mocking me
These are but fancies thou art speaking of,
The incorporeal children of the brain.

F. Aha, brave *Œdipus*! my lady *Sphinx*
Had stood in danger with thee. Hast thou guessed it?
These friends once harboured with me, now departed,

These witnesses to my clear faith and fondness,
They are all thoughts, all glorious thoughts of thee,
Infinite in their number, bright as rainbows,
And in pervading presence visitant
Whenever I am forced to be alone,
And losing thee to talk with stars and streams.

R. And, by our Lady 'tis a good exchange.
The stars and streams are silent—cannot chide thee—
Will let a foolish woman talk by the hour
Her gentle nonsense, and reprove her never,
Nor with one frown dim their ambrosial smiles;
Thou find'st not me so easy.

F. Still suspicious!
What, must I tell thee all this day's employment;
Tell how I read the heavens with curious glances,
And by a sort of wild astrology
Taught me by a young god, whose name is Love,
But who before all things resembles thee,
I tried to shape in those high starry eyes
The very looks of thine?

R. Nay, own Fiammetta,
If we must needs have such usurping spirits,
And turn the bright heavens from the things they are
Into poor semblances of earthly creatures,
They shall be all thine own—take them and wear
them—

Be thou the moon, the sunset, what thou wilt
So I behold thee.

F. I will be the sky!
No narrower bound than its far unknown limit
Shall keep me prisoner. Thou hast called me fair—
Often and often on my lips thou hast sworn it—
What wilt thou say when thou shalt see me come
To press thee in those blue celestial folds,

To gaze upon thee with a million eyes,
Each eye like these, and each a fire of love ?

R. I would not have thee other than thou art,
Even in the least complexion of a dimple,
For all the pictures Pietro Perugin,
My master, ever painted. And pardon me,
I would not have the heavens anything
But what they are and were and still shall be,
Despite thy wish, Fiammetta. 'Tis not well
To make th' eternal Beauty ministrant
To our frail lives and frailer human loves.
Three thousand years perhaps before we lived,
Some Eastern maiden framed thy very wish,
And loved and died, and in the passionless void
Vanished for ever. Yet this glorious Nature
Took not a thought of her, but shone above
The blank she left, as on the place she filled.
So will it be with us—a dark night waits us—
Another moment, we must plunge within it—
Let us not mar the glimpses of pure Beauty,
Now streaming in like moonlight, with the fears,
The joys, the hurried thoughts, that rise and fall
To the hot pulses of a mortal heart.

F. How now ? Thy voice was wont to speak of Love :
I shall not know it, if its language change :
The clear, low utterance, and angelic tone
Will lose their music, if they praise not love.

R. And when I praise it not, or cease to fold thee
Thus in my arms, Fiammetta, may I die
Unwept, unhonoured, barred without the gate
Of that high temple, where I minister
With daily ritual of coloured lights
For candelabras, and pure saintly forms
To image forth the loveliness I serve.

I did but chide thee that thou minglest ever
Beauty with beauty, as with perfume perfume :
Thou canst not love a rosebud for itself,
But thinkest strait who gave that rose to thee ;
The leaping fountain minds thee of the music
We heard together ; and the very heaven,
Th' illimitable firmament of God,
Must steal a likeness to a Roman studio
Ere it can please thee.

F. I am a poor woman, Sir ;
A woman, poor in all things but her heart,
And when I cease to love I cease to live.
You will not cure me of this heresy ;
Flames would not burn it out, nor sharp rocks tear it.

R. I am a merciful Inquisitor ;
I shall enjoin thee but a gentle penance.

F. The culprit trusts the judge, and feels no fear
In his immediate presence ; a rare thing
In Italy ! Proceed.

R. There was a thing
Thou askedst me this morning.

F. I remember—
To see the picture thou hast kept from me.
I prithee, let me.

R. It shall be thy penance
To find it full of faults, and not one beauty.

F. Where stands it ?

R. There, behind the canopy
A great Venetian nobleman, esteemed
For a good judge, they say, by Lionardo,
Paid me a princely sum but yesterday
For this poor portrait.

F. Portrait ? and of whom ?
Is it a lady ?

R. Yes—a Roman lady—
About your stature ; and her hair is bound
With a pearl fillet, even as your own.
Her eyes are just Fiammetta's ; they are turned
On a fair youth, who sits beside her, gazing
As he would drink up all their light in his.
Upon her arm a bracelet ; and thereon
Is graven—

F. Name it !

R. Raphael Urbinensis.

F. This kiss—and this—reward thee—let me see it.

SONNET.

TO MY MOTHER.

January 1831.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

WHEN barren doubt like a late-coming snow,
Made an unkind December of my spring,
That all the pretty flowers did droop for woe,
And the sweet birds their love no more would sing ;
Then the remembrance of thy gentle faith,
Mother beloved, would steal upon my heart ;
Fond feeling saved me from that utter scathe,
And from thy hope I could not live apart.
Now that my mind hath passed from wintry gloom,
And on the calmed waters once again
Ascendant Faith circles with silver plume,
That casts a charmed shade, not now in pain,
Thou child of Christ, in joy I think of thee,
And mingle prayers for what we both may be.

John Sterling.

1806—1844.

IN one of the conversations between Will Ladislaw and Dorothea Brooke (George Eliot, "Middlemarch"), Dorothea says to Ladislaw "Perhaps you will be a poet?" "That depends," replies Ladislaw. "To be a poet is to have a soul so quick to discern that no shade of quality escapes it, and so quick to feel that discernment is but a hand playing with finely ordered variety on the chords of emotion—a soul in which knowledge passes instantaneously into feeling, and feeling flashes back as a new organ of knowledge. One may have that condition by fits only." "But you leave out the poems," said Dorothea. "I think they are wanted to complete the poet. I understand what you mean about knowledge passing into feeling, for that seems to be just what I experience. But I am sure I could never produce a poem." "You *are* a poem—and that is to be the best part of a poet—what makes up the poet's consciousness in his best moods," replies Ladislaw.

John Sterling, the subject of this short memoir, was a Poem. He had the quick discerning soul in which knowledge passed rapidly into feeling, and feeling flashed back into new knowledge. And while he himself ever remained more poetical than his poetry, he did not "leave out" the poems. Though truth compels the statement that his poetry, diligently

as he laboured over it, never secured success or admiration in his own day, even from those who loved and honoured him, and only are read nowadays because he has been immortalised in one of the finest biographies in our language, "The Life of John Sterling," by his friend Thomas Carlyle.

In the case of poets such as Milton, Dryden, Pope, Byron, Wordsworth, we devour the record of their lives, and treasure up every scrap of authentic knowledge respecting them because of their works. We go from their poetry to their lives. We ask what manner of men were these poets who have wedded such grand ideas to immortal verse? In the case of Sterling exactly the reverse process takes place. We read the story of his life in Carlyle's noble book, and we ask ourselves what kind of poetry fell from the lips and the heart of this remarkable man. We go from the man to his work.

A truly remarkable man must he have been who could be the friend and inspirer of two such opposites as Mill and Carlyle. Indeed, when he died, Archdeacon Hare, a gifted and accomplished man, under whom Sterling acted as a curate for a short time—wrote a memoir of him; Mill seriously debated within himself a similar duty, and Carlyle, as we have seen, has handed his name down to posterity with his own. "He had," says Carlyle, "an attitude of frank, cheerful impetuosity, of hopeful speed and alacrity; which indeed his physiognomy, on all sides of it, offered as the chief expression. Alacrity, velocity, joyous ardour, dwelt in the eyes too, which were of brownish gray, full of bright kindly life, rapid and frank, rather than deep or strong." He possessed "a certain splendour, beautiful but not

of the deepest or the softest, which I could call a splendour as of burnished metal—fiery valour of heart, swift, decisive insight and utterance . . . in short, a flash as of clear-glancing, sharp-cutting steel, lay in the whole nature of the man, in his heart and his intellect, marking alike the grandeur and the limits of both.”

There are some men with keen and vivid intellects, warm hearts and spontaneous sympathy, who have the power to inspire others, to exalt them, to make them believe in themselves, to interpret them to themselves. To breathe in the atmosphere and presence of such men is to be made mentally, morally, and physically better. One leaves them wiser and nobler for the contact. Such a spirit was John Sterling. He had (as Dr. Garnett aptly says) a genius for friendship, and men of the most opposing schools of thought, delighted in his friendship, and gained added power from his sympathy.

Born in 1806, the son of Mr. Edward Sterling who, as one of the most powerful writers on the staff of the *Times* newspaper, was a political and social force in his day, his path in life was, from the pecuniary point of view, always smooth. But consumptive tendencies early manifested themselves, and his aims, ambitions, and his work were constantly interrupted by attacks from the disease to which he succumbed at the age of thirty-eight. There is little doubt that, had he possessed health, Sterling would have made a great place for himself as an orator and parliamentary leader. His dialectical skill, his resource in discussion were altogether exceptional; but strength was denied him for this walk in life, and his ambition, his eager thought, and his desire

to help mankind forward could only be manifested in literature. In this, however, he has given us but little. His essays and tales were reverently collected after his death by Archdeacon Hare from *The Athenæum*, which he (together with Frederick Denison Maurice) for some time edited, and other periodicals; but they strike the reader of to-day as being the promising work of a man who, later on, would make his mark, rather than as having great merit of themselves. His poems, with the exception of "The Election" and "Strafford," are contained in a modest little volume bearing date 1839.

From the collection of Poems several characteristic pieces are selected. To our mind, remembering his most tender affection for his motherless children (his wife predeceased him) and his brave, but deeply touching letters to his eldest child as he himself was fading fast away, the "Song of Eve to Cain" speaks volumes:—

"So darling shalt thou grow
A man,
While we shall downward go,
Descend each day a span
And sink beneath the wo
Of deaths from sin that grow."

From his deathbed he wrote simple, but most pathetic letters to his son. Of them Carlyle says: "They give, beyond any he has written, a noble image of the intrinsic Sterling;—the same face we had long known; but painted now as on the Azure of Eternity, serene, victorious, divinely sad; the dusts and extraneous disfigurements imprinted on it by the world, now washed away." He died on the 18th of September, 1844. H. J. GIBBS.

POEMS.

1839.

JOHN STERLING.

I.—THE HUSBANDMAN.

EARTH, of man the bounteous mother,
Feeds him still with corn and wine ;
He who best would aid a brother,
Shares with him these gifts divine.

Many a power within her bosom
Noiseless, hidden, works beneath ;
Hence are seed, and leaf, and blossom,
Golden ear and clustered wreath.

These to swell with strength and beauty,
Is the royal task of man ;
Man's a king, his throne is Duty,
Since his work on earth began.

Bud and harvest, bloom and vintage,
These, like man, are fruits of earth ;
Stamped in clay, a heavenly mintage,
All from dust receive their birth.

Barn and mill, and wine-vat's treasures,
Earthly goods for earthly lives,
These are Nature's ancient pleasures,
These her child from her derives.

What the dream, but vain rebelling,
If from earth we sought to flee ?
'Tis our stored and ample dwelling,
'Tis from it the skies we see.

Wind and frost, and hour and season,
Land and water, sun and shade,
Work with these, as bids thy reason,
For they work thy toil to aid.

Sow thy seed and reap in gladness !
Man himself is all a seed ;
Hope and hardship, joy and sadness,
Slow the plant to ripeness lead.

II.—THE HUNTER.

MERRILY winds the hunter's horn,
And loud the ban of dogs replying,
When before the shout of the fleet-foot morn,
The shadows of night are flying.

Sullen the boar in the deep green wood,
And proud the stag that roams the forest,
And noble the steed with his warlike blood,
That exults when the toil is sorest.

Fair is the land of hill and plain,
And lonesome dells in misty mountains ;
And the crags where eagles in tempest reign,
And swan-loved lakes and fountains.

These are the joys that hunters find,
Whate'er the sky that's bending o'er them,
When they leave their cares on their beds behind,
And earth is all fresh before them.

Day ever chases away the night,
And wind pursues the waves of ocean,
And the stars are brother-like hunters bright,
And all is in ceaseless motion,

Life is a chase, and so 'tis joy,
And hope foretells the hunter's morrow ;
'Tis the skill of man and the bliss of boy
To gallop away from sorrow.

III.—THE MARINERS.

RAISE we the yard and ply the oar,
The breeze is calling us swift away ;
The waters are breaking in foam on the shore ;
Our boat no more can stay, can stay.

When the blast flies fast in the clouds on high,
And billows are roaring loud below,
The boatman's song, in the stormy sky,
Still dares the gale to blow, to blow.

The timber that frames his faithful boat,
Was dandled in storms on the mountain peaks,
And in storms, with a bounding keel, 'twill float,
And laugh when the sea-fiend shrieks, and shrieks.

And then in the calm, and glistening nights,
We have tales of wonder, and joy, and fear,
And deeds of the powerful ocean sprites,
With which our hearts we cheer, we cheer.

For often the dauntless mariner knows
That he must sink to the land beneath,
Where the diamond on trees of coral grows,
In the emerald halls of Death, of Death.

Onward we sweep through smooth and storm ;
We are voyagers all in shine and gloom ;
And the dreamer who skulks by his chimney warm,
Drifts in his sleep to doom, to doom.

IV.--THE ROSE AND THE GAUNTLET.

LOW spake the knight to the peasant girl,
"I tell thee sooth—I am belted Earl ;
Fly with me from this garden small,
And thou shalt sit in my castle's hall.

Thou shalt have pomp, and wealth, and pleasure,
Joys beyond thy fancy's measure ;
Here with my sword and horse I stand,
To bear thee away to my distant land.

Take, thou fairest ! this full-blown rose,
A token of Love that as ripely blows."
With his glove of steel he plucked the token,
But it fell from his gauntlet crushed and broken.

The maiden exclaimed—"Thou see'st, Sir Knight,
Thy fingers of iron can only smite ;
And, like the rose thou hast torn and scattered,
I in thy grasp should be wrecked and shattered."

She trembled and blushed, and her glances fell,
But she turned from the Knight, and said, "Farewell ;"
"Not so," he cried, "will I lose my prize,
I heed not thy words, but I read thine eyes."

He lifted her up in his grasp of steel,
And he mounted and spurred with furious heel ;
But her cry drew forth her hoary sire,
Who snatched his bow from above the fire.

Swift from the valley the warrior fled,
Swifter the bolt of the cross-bow sped ;
And the weight that pressed on the fleet-foot horse,
Was the living man, and the woman's corse.

That morning the rose was bright of hue ;
That morning the maiden was fair to view ;
But the evening sun its beauty shed
On the withered leaves, and the maiden dead.

V.—THE SEA-MAID.

A MAIDEN came gliding o'er the sea,
In a boat as light as boat could be,
And she sang in tones so light and free,
"O ! where is the youth that will follow me ?"

Her forehead was white as the pearly shell,
And in flickering waves her ringlets fell,
Her bosom heaved with a gentle swell,
And her voice was a distant vesper bell.

And still she sang while the western light
Fell on her figure so soft and bright,
"O ! where shall I find the brave young sprite
That will follow the track of my skiff to-night ?

To the strand the youths of the village run,
When the witching song has scarce begun,
And ere the set of that evening sun,
Fifteen bold lovers the maid has won.

They hoisted the sail, and they plied the oar,
And away they went from their native shore,
While the damsel's pinnace flew fast before,
But never, O ! never we saw them more.

VI.—THE SONG OF EVE TO CAIN.

O H ! rest, my baby, rest !
The day
Is glowing down the west ;
Now tired of sunny play,
Upon thy mother's breast
O ! rest, my darling, rest !

Thou first-born child of man,
In thee
New joy for us began,
Which seemed all dead to be,
When that so needful ban
From Eden exiled man.

But more than Paradise
Was ours,
When thou with angel eyes,
Amid our blighted flowers
Wast born, a heavenly prize
Unknown in Paradise.

My happy garden thou
Where I
Make many a hopeful vow,
And every hour espy
New bloom on each young bough ;
My sinless tree art thou.

I fearless reap thy fruit
Of bliss ;
And I who am thy root,
Am too the air to kiss
The gleams that o'er thee shoot ;
And fed, I feed thy fruit.

Thy father's form and pride
And thought,
In thee yet undescried,
Shall soon be fully wrought,
Grow tall, and bright, and wide,
In thee our hope and pride.

Nay, do not stir, my child,
Be still ;
In thee is reconciled
To man Heaven's righteous Will.
To thee the Curse is mild,
And smites not thee, my child.

To us our sin has borne
Its doom.
From light dethroned and torn,
'Twas ours to dwell in gloom ;
But thou, a better morn,
By that dark night art borne.

Thou shalt, my child, be free
From sin,
Nor taste the fatal tree,
For thou from us shalt win
A wisdom cheap to thee
So thou from ill be free

My bird, my flower, my star,
My boy !
My all things fair that are,
My spring of endless joy,
From thee is Heaven not far,
From thee, its earthly star.

So, darling, shalt thou grow
A man,
While we shall downward go,
Descend each day a span,
And sink beneath the wo
Of deaths from sin that grow.

And thou, perhaps, shalt see
A race
Brought forth by us, like thee ;
Though strength like thine, and grace,
In none shall ever be
Of all whom earth can see.

And thou amid mankind
Shalt move
With glorious form and mind,
In holiness and love ;
And all in thee shall find
The bliss of all mankind.

Then rest, my child, O rest !
The day
Has darkened down the west.
Thou dream the night away
Upon thy mother's breast ;
O ! rest, my darling, rest !

Richard Chenevix Trench.

1807—1886.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH was born in Dublin, Sept. 5th, 1807. After graduating at Cambridge he entered the Church, and spent several useful studious years as a country curate and rector. In 1835 he published "*Justin Martyr and other Poems*," and these being favourably received he followed them with "*Honor Neale*." "*Poems from Eastern Sources*" appeared in 1842. In 1845 and 1846 he was Hulsean Lecturer. It was in 1851 that Trench published the first fruits of his researches into language. Delivered originally to the students in an obscure normal school for elementary teachers, these lectures have been over and over again reprinted; they have become a class book wherever English is studied, and together with those other volumes, "*English Past and Present*," "*A Select Glossary of English Words*," and "*On Some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries*," are to be found in every philological library. It is in these linguistic studies that Trench is seen at his best, and when engaged in the etymology, the history, the morality, or the poetry in words he shows distinct signs of a gift almost akin to genius. "I am sure," he says, "that for many a young man his first discovery that words are living powers, are the vesture, yea, even the body, which thoughts weave for themselves, has been like the dropping of scales from his

eyes, like the acquiring of another sense, or the introduction into a new world." Again on the statement that language is "fossil poetry," how eagerly Trench seizes the suggestion and expands it. "Just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern or the finely vertebrated lizard, such as now, it may be, have been extinct for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would have otherwise been theirs,—so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages, of men long since in their graves, of men whose very names have perished, these, which would so easily have perished too, preserved and made safe forever."

In 1856, his work in biblical criticism and philology,—the Revised Version of the Bible was due partly to his advocacy,—was rewarded by his promotion to the Deanery of Westminster—that place of honour which has been filled by such scholars as Dean Ireland and Arthur Stanley, and such orators as Samuel Wilberforce,—and here he spent seven valuable and fruitful years. It is impossible to conceive a more fitting abode for a man of the studious habits, poetical temperament, fervid piety and oratorical gifts of Trench than the Deanery of Westminster. It offers at once a place of retired leisure and a pulpit from which a powerful mind may influence the vast metropolis, nay all England itself, as did Dean Stanley.

It was in the cloisters of Westminster that Trench meditated and studied and gathered up his poems of those and preceding years, publishing them in 1865.

Shortly after this he accepted the Archbishopric of Dublin, which he resigned some little time before his death.

Dr. Trench's poems fill a considerable volume, and possess many merits. They manifest true culture and large command of language. They are full of noble aspiration, breathing deep and sincere piety; but do not evidence any strongly marked originality. His verse, beautiful and attractive as it is, is more that of a devout mind, and a rare and fine scholar with much music in his soul, than of a poet by Divine decree.

In the library of the British Museum there is an interesting memento connecting him with one of the greatest poets of this century. It is a tiny volume of poems, privately printed and circulated, and pasted on the inside cover of which is a letter written in 1841 in the handwriting of Trench—then a young country curate—in which he says to the poet, "I trust that this little volume, which in a poetical sense is but a trifle, will yet find the same acceptance from you which my other verses have done. The poems have a certain unity in themselves for they all relate, more or less nearly, to the same sad event" (the loss of a child), "and are the records, I believe the true ones, of my own feelings under the heaviest sorrow, —I may say the only thing deserving the name of sorrow with which I have yet been visited. . . . I conclude with feelings of permanent obligation to yourself far deeper than words can express." The little gift appears to have been willingly accepted; for Wordsworth twice wrote his name in the book, once in a good strong hand apparently on first

receiving it, and a second time when that hand was grown infirm and destined soon to lay the pen down for the last time.

The contents of the volume are, as the author himself modestly appraised them, trifles; but in them simple sincere piety and resignation are reflected in equally simple language:—

“Yet when my Lord did ask me on what side
I were content,
The grief, whereby I must be purified,
To me were sent;
As each imagined anguish did appear,
Each withering bliss,
Before my soul, I cried, “Oh, spare me here,
Oh no! not this.”

Dr. Trench's closing years were troublous ones. He was Archbishop of Dublin in those trying times which saw the disestablishment of the Irish Church. It was a grievous trial to him, he suffered from much misconception; but came out triumphantly from the ordeal. He died March 28th, 1886, at a ripe age—full of years and honours, having conferred lasting obligations on many generations of scholars.

H. J. GIBBS.

POEMS.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

I.—A WALK IN A CHURCHYARD.

WE walk'd within the churchyard bounds,
My little boy and I,—
He laughing, running happy rounds,
I pacing mournfully.

"Nay, Child ! it is not well," I said,
"Among the graves to shout,—
To laugh and play among the dead,
And make this noisy rout."

A moment to my side he clung,
Leaving his merry play,
A moment still'd his joyous tongue,
Almost as hush'd as they :

Then, quite forgetting the command,
In life's exulting burst
Of early glee, let go my hand
Joyous as at the first.

And now I did not check him more,
For, taught by Nature's face ;
I had grown wiser than before,
Ev'n in that moment's space.

She spread no funeral pall above
That patch of churchyard ground,
But the same azure vault of love
As hung o'er all around.

And white clouds o'er that spot would pass
As freely as elsewhere ;
The sunshine on no other grass
A richer hue might wear.

And form'd from out that very mould
In which the dead did lie,
The daisy with its eye of gold,
Look'd up into the sky.

The rook was wheeling overhead,
Nor hastened to be gone ;
The small bird did its glad notes shed,
Perched on a grey head-stone.

And God, I said, would never give
This light upon the earth,
Nor bid in childhood's heart to live
These springs of gushing mirth,

If our one wisdom was to mourn,
And linger with the dead,
To nurse, as wisest,—thoughts forlorn
Of worm and earthy bed.

Oh no ! the glory earth puts on,
The child's uncheck'd delight,
Both witness to a triumph won—
(If we but read aright) :

A triumph won o'er Sin and Death—
From these the Saviour saves ;
And, like a happy infant, Faith
Can play among the graves.

II.—A LEGEND OF TOLEDO.

FAR down below the Christian captives pine
In dungeon depths, and whoso dares to bring
Assuagements for their wounds, or food, or wine,
Must brave the fiercest vengeance of the king.

Richly is spread above the royal board,
The palace windows blaze with festal light,
And many a lady, many a Moorish lord,
The morning's triumph celebrate at night.

But could they all without remorse or fear
Feast, as although on earth were to be found
No hunger to appease, no want to cheer,
No dark and hopeless places underground?

Neither of knight or captain is it told
That he was shamed at heart to do this thing;
One only was there, pitiful and bold—
A maiden, daughter of this impious king.

Three times the beauteous messenger of grace
She, passing to the dungeon from the hall,
Shone like an angel in that gloomy place,
And brought relief to some, and hope to all.

But envious eyes were on her, and her sire,
Upon her way encountering unawares
Her passing thither the fourth time, in ire
Bid show what hidden in her lap she bears.

Thus, willing to condemn her in the sight
Of all, he spake: she tremblingly obeyed,
When, if old legends speak the truth aright,
Flowers filled her lap,—these only it displayed:

Roses and pinks and lilies there were found,
Marvel to her and them who saw the same ;
All sweetest flowers that grow from earthly ground,
But nothing that might bring rebuke or blame.

Whate'er is sown in love—the lowliest deed—
Shall bloom and be a flower in Paradise ;
Yet springs not often from that precious seed
Harvest so prompt as this before our eyes.

But afterward how rescued from the court,
And from a faith which cannot save or bless,
To far-off hermitage she made resort,
A saintly dweller in the wilderness,

Her story, pictured on a cloister wall
In old Toledo, gives us not to know :
This only there appears, and this is all
We need to ask, whether of weal or woe—

That unto her who was in mercy bold,
Was given the knowledge of a faith divine :
For there in death we see her, and her hold
Is on the Cross, salvation's bless'd sign.

III.—LOVE.

SEEMETH not Love at times so occupied
For thee, as though it cared for none beside ?

To great and small things Love alike can reach,
And cares for each as all, and all as each.

Love of my bonds partook, that I might be
In turn partaker of its liberty.

Love found me in the wilderness, at cost
Of painful quests, when I myself had lost.

Love on its shoulders joyfully did lay
Me, weary with the greatness of my way.

Love lit the lamp and swept the house all round,
Till the lost money in the end was found.

Love the King's image there would stamp again,
Effaced in part, and soiled with rust and stain.

'Twas Love, whose quick and ever-watchful eye
The wanderer's first step homeward did espy.

From its own wardrobe Love gave word to bring
What things I needed—shoes, and robe, and ring.

Love threatens that it may not strike ; and still
Unneeded, strikes, that so it may not kill.

Love set me up on high ; when I grew vain
Of that my height, Love brought me down again.

Love often draws good for us from our ill,
Skilful to bless us even against our will.

The bond-servant of Love alone is free ;
All other freedom is but slavery.

How far above all price Love's costly wine,
Which can the meanest chalice make divine !

Fear this effects, that I do not the ill,
Love more—that I thereunto have no will.

Seeds burst not their dark cells without a throe ;
All birth is effort ; shall not Love's be so ?

Love weeps, but from its eyes these two things win
The largest tears—its own, its brother's sin.

The sweetness of the trodden camomile
Is Love's, which, injured, yields more sweets the while.

The heart of Love is with a thousand woes
Pierced, which secure indifference never knows.

The rose eye wears the silent thorn at heart,
And never yet might pain from Love depart.

Once o'er this painful earth a man did move,
The Man of griefs, because the Man of Love.

Hope, Faith, and Love at God's high altar shine,
Lamp triple-branched, and fed with oil divine.

Two of these triple-lights shall once grow pale,
They burn without, but Love within the veil.

Nothing is true but Love, nor aught of worth ;
Love is the incense which doth sweeten earth.

O merchant at heaven's mart for heavenly ware,
Love is the only coin which passes there.

The wine of Love can be obtained of none,
Save Him who trod the winepress all alone.

IV.—ALMA.

THOUGH till now ungraced in story, scant al-
though thy waters be,
Alma, roll those waters proudly, proudly roll them
to the sea :

Yesterday, unnamed, unhonoured, but to wandering
Tartar known—

Now thou art a voice for ever, to the world's four
corners blown.

In two nations' annals graven, thou art now a death-
less name,
And a star for ever shining in the firmament of fame.
Many a great and ancient river, crowned with city,
tower, and shrine,
Little streamlet, knows no magic, boasts no potency
like thine ;
Cannot shed the light thou sheddest around many a
living head,
Cannot lend the light thou lendest to the memories
of the dead.
Yea, nor all unsoothed their sorrow, who can, proudly
mourning, say—
When the first strong burst of anguish shall have
wept itself away—
“He has pass'd from us, the loved one ; but he sleeps
with them that died
By the Alma, at the winning of that terrible hill-side.”
Yes, and in the days far onward, when we all are calm
as those
Who beneath thy vines and willows on their hero-
beds repose,
Thou on England's banners blazon'd with the famous
fields of old,
Shalt, where other fields are winning, wave above
the brave and bold ;
And our sons unborn shall nerve them for some great
deed to be done,
By that twentieth of September, when the Alma's
heights were won.
O thou river! dear for ever to the gallant, to the
free—
Alma, roll thy waters proudly, proudly roll them to
the sea.

V.—THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I SAY to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street—
That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above ;
That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain ;
That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led ;
Yet, if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day ;
And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.
And ere thou leave him, say thou this
Yet one word more—they only miss
The winning of that final bliss,
Who will not count it true, that Love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move.
And one thing further make him know,
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,
Despite of all which seems at strife
With blessing, all with curses rife,
That this *is* blessing, this *is* life.

VI.—PRAYER.

WHEN prayer delights thee least, then learn to say,
Soul, now is greatest need that thou should'st pray.

Crookèd and warped I am, and I would fain
Straighten myself by thy right line again.

Oh come, warm sun, and ripen my late fruits ;
Pierce, genial showers, down to my parchèd roots.

My well is bitter ; cast therein the tree,
That sweet henceforth its brackish waves may be.

Say what is prayer, when it is prayer indeed ?
The mighty utterance of a mighty need.

The man is praying, who doth press with might
Out of his darkness into God's own light.

White heat the iron in the furnace won ;
Withdrawn from thence, 'tis cold and hard anon.

Flowers from their stalks divided, presently
Droop, fail, and wither in the gazer's eye.

The greenest leaf divided from its stem
To speedy withering doth itself condemn.

The largest river from its fountain head
Cut off, leaves soon a parched and dusty bed.

All things that live from God their sustenance wait,
And sun and moon are beggars at his gate.

All skirts extended of thy mantle hold,
When angel-hands from heaven are scattering gold.

SONNETS.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

*I.—“THOU CAM’ST NOT TO THY PLACE BY
ACCIDENT.”*

THOU cam’st not to thy place by accident,
It is the very place God meant for thee;
And shouldst thou there small scope for action see,
Do not for this give room to discontent;
Nor let the time thou owest to God be spent
In idly dreaming how thou mightest be,
In what concerns thy spiritual life, more free
From outward hindrance or impediment.
For presently this hindrance thou shalt find
That without which all goodness were a task
So slight, that virtue never could grow strong:
And wouldst thou do one duty to his mind,
The Imposer’s—over-burdened thou shalt ask,
And own the need of grace to help, ere long.

*II.—“A WRETCHED THING IT WERE, TO
HAVE OUR HEART.”*

A WRETCHED thing it were, to have our heart
Like a thronged highway or a populous street,
Where every idle thought has leave to meet,
Pause, or pass on as in an open mart;
Or like some roadside pool, which no nice art
Has guarded that the cattle may not beat
And foul it with a multitude of feet,
Till of the heavens it can give back no part.
But keep thou thine a holy solitude,
For He who would walk there, would walk alone;
He who would drink there, must be first endued
With single right to call that stream his own;
Keep thou thine heart, close-fastened, unrevealed
A fenced garden and a fountain sealed.

III.—*VESUVIUS.*

(AS SEEN FROM CAPRI.)

A WREATH of light blue vapour, pure and rare,
Mounts, scarcely seen against the bluer sky,
In quiet adoration, silently—
Till the faint currents of the upper air
Dislunn it, and it forms, dissolving there,
The dome, as of a palace, hung on high
Over the mountain ; underneath it lie
Vineyards and bays and cities white and fair.
Might we not think this beauty would engage
All living things unto one pure delight ?
Oh vain belief ! for here our records tell,
Rome's understanding tyrant from men's sight
Hid, as within a guilty citadel,
The shame of his dishonourable age.

IV.—*THE SAME.*

AS when unto a mother, having chid
Her child in anger, there have straight ensued
Repentings for her quick and angry mood,
Till she would fain see all its traces hid
Quite out of sight—even so has Nature bid
Fair flowers, that on the scarred earth she has strewed,
To blossom, and called up the taller wood
To cover what she ruined and undid.
Oh ! and her mood of anger did not last
More than an instant ; but her work of peace,
Restoring and repairing, comforting
The earth, her stricken child, will never cease ;
For that was her strange work, and quickly past,
To this her genial toil no end the years shall bring.

V.—GIBRALTAR.

ENGLAND, we love thee better than we know—
And this I learned, when after wanderings long
'Mid people of another stock and tongue,
I heard again thy martial music blow,
And saw thy gallant children to and fro
Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge gates,
Twin giants watching the Herculean Straits.
When first I came in sight of that brave show,
It made my very heart within me dance,
To think that thou thy proud foot shouldst advance
Forward so far into the mighty sea ;
Joy was it and exultation to behold
Thine ancient standard's rich emblazonry,
A glorious picture by the wind unrolled.

VI.—RETURNING HOME.

TO leave unseen so many a glorious sight,
To leave so many lands unvisited,
To leave so many worthiest books unread,
Unrealized so many visions bright ;—
Oh ! wretched yet inevitable spite
Of our brief span, that we must yield our breath,
And wrap us in the unfeeling coil of death,
So much remaining of unproved delight.
But hush, my soul, and vain regrets, be stilled ;
Find rest in Him who is the complement
Of whatsoe'er transcends our mortal doom,
Of baffled hope and unfulfilled intent ;
In the clear vision and aspect of whom
All longings and all hopes shall be fulfilled.

Thomas Gordon Hake.

1809.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE was born at Leeds on March 10th, 1809. At the age of seven he received a presentation for Christ's Church School, Newgate Street, London, where he studied amid still fresh traditions of Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb, and Coleridge. He became a medical student at St. George's in the time of Sir Benjamin Brodie and Dr. Thomas Young. He studied chemistry at the Royal Institution under Brand and Faraday, and in the first days of University College he followed the courses of anatomy under G. S. Pattison. After studying at Edinburgh and Glasgow, and graduating at the university of the latter, he was for a lengthened period at the medical schools in Florence, to which town he frequently returned. Having visited various cities in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and France, Dr. Hake settled in Brighton as physician to the Dispensary. Five years later he went for a time to Paris, mainly to extend and consolidate his knowledge of physiological anatomy. After being physician to the County Hospital of Suffolk from 1839 to 1853, Dr. Hake was for five years physician to the West London Hospital, in the course of which he gave special attention to comparative osteology, contributing a paper on the subject to the Medico-chirurgical Society. About the same time he

published a small work on "Vital Force." Throughout his professional career he frequently wrote on medical subjects, but letters constantly divided his attention with science.

Dr. Hake's contributions to *belles-lettres*, apart from poetry, have been varied and considerable, giving evidence of much resource and energy as well as literary facility and grace. For *Ainsworth's Magazine* he wrote, in 1850-53, a romantic trilogy, beginning with "Valdarno; or, The Ordeal of Art-worship." About 1870 he contributed to the *New Monthly Magazine*, a character novel entitled "Her Winning Ways," exhibiting those powers of insight, analysis, and subtle appreciation which find their appropriate sphere of effort in his best poems. In 1883 he published an acute and suggestive monograph on "The Powers of the Alphabet," in which the nature of accent is demonstrated on physiological and acoustic principles.

As early as 1839 Dr. Hake published "The Piro-mides," an Egyptian tragedy on the mysteries of Isis and her priesthood. A few years later appeared "The World's Epitaph," a lengthened poem, reproduced in large measure in "Madeline and other Poems," 1871. Then followed in 1872 "Parables and Tales," two of which—"The Blind Boy" and "Old Souls"—attracted much attention. The work was very favourably noticed in the *Fortnightly Review*, by D. G. Rossetti. "New Symbols," including "The Snake Charmer," "Ecce Homo," "Reminiscence," "The Birth of Venus," etc., was published in 1876. In 1879 appeared "Legends of the Morrow," containing "The Palmist," of which Rossetti expressed his warm admiration, asserting

in one of his letters that the theme was "the finest ever struck out by the author," and adding that none finer could ever be struck out by him or any other writer. In 1880 appeared "Maiden Ecstasy." "The Serpent Play," embodying in the form of a dramatic allegory a legend of the middle ages, was published in 1883, and in 1890 appeared a collection of sonnets entitled "The New Day." "The Venus Urania" and the "Infant Medusa," by Dr. Hake, were contributed to the *Academy*, "Deaf and Dumb" to *Merry England*, and "The Golden Wedding" to the *Magazine of Art*. In the "Collected Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti," edited by his brother, Mr. W. M. Rossetti, there are reviews of "Madeline" and "Parables and Tales." Many of the poems receive the highest praise, "Old Souls," "The Blind Boy," "Lily of the Valley," and "The Cripple" being chosen for special commendation.

Dr. Hake has various methods of expression and a *motif* always his own. He excels in narrative, but essays with success the sonnet and dramatic form. Throughout his works, from "Madeline" to "The New Day," he is animated by the same lofty moral purpose. Keenly introspective, as well as externally observant, Dr. Hake is not satisfied till he discovers underlying motives and aims. These he delineates in descriptive study or fascinating story, employing in their development his power of terse, epigrammatic expression and his ample pictorial resources. His attitude towards the teaching of Nature seems to be fairly revealed in the plaintive yearning of his own "Blind Boy":—

"The waves with mingling echoes fall;
And memories of a long-lost light

From far-off mornings seem to call,
And what I hear comes into sight.
The beauteous skies flash back again,
But, ah! the light will not remain!"

What man is in himself and his relations and responsibilities; how Nature affects him, and how far he can penetrate the mysteries by which he is encompassed; what he should learn from the beauty of the universe and the love that is manifest over seeming inequalities; and why he should be energetic, active, and self-denying—these are questions that force themselves on the attention of Dr. Hake in his poetical survey. Even in the descriptive poems the indications of the philosopher's presence may rest merely on significant touches, but still they are there. Thus "The Birth of Venus," which is one of the most impressive settings of a Nature-myth since "Hyperion," gives the sea "couched 'neath a heaven of love"; and we further find in the spirit of Wordsworth that natural processes are effects, and that their development is a proof that "the Mighty Being is awake":—

"Nature's imperious passions intertwine,
And one great spirit moves upon the sea:
With silver light the emerald waters shine
Along the procreant path of Deity."

Beauty constantly challenges admiration, and the strongest, making response, will most keenly feel his own limitation and unworthiness. It is only the "Painter" of superlative merit who despairs at the thought of his ideal, and exclaims in the wake of the departing Summer,—

"Oh! could I paint thee with these ravished eyes,—
Catch in my hollow palm thy overflow,
Who broadcast fling'st away thy witcheries!"

It is when the human spirit is manifestly apathetic and irresponsible that the poet's feeling is disturbed, and he bewails the loss of harmonious adjustment. In "Old Morality" the spirit of sterling honesty and of steadfast devotion to duty is represented as finding little or no encouragement for its exertions. "Old Souls" is a bold and telling satire, skilful in deliberate detail and strong in measured passion, and wrestling with the direct effects of indifference, and of custom that is heavy as frost and deep almost as life. The quick and searching satirical thrusts of the poem, its intolerance of systematic hypocrisy, its resonant earnestness of tone and tender admiration of duty quietly done, place it with such lyrics of moral purpose as Wordsworth's "Poet's Epitaph" and Rossetti's "Soothfast."

But Dr. Hake's full strength is seen in his introspective and character poems. His imaginative delineation impresses like a faithful record, and the appearance of verisimilitude is accentuated by the narrative form of many of the poems. Incidents arrest the attention, while the intellect and the feelings are challenged by the characterisation. In the poems of "New Symbols" this is more decided than it is in the tentative spiritual study of "Madeline," with its charming series of phases of sleep; and it is an advance on the separate styles—or rather it is a combination of the complementary narrative and allegorical styles—illustrated respectively in "The Blind Boy" and the "Lily of the Valley." We find in "New Symbols" such poems as "The Snake Charmer," "Pythagoras," "Michael Angelo," "The Painter," and "The Philosopher," all set as in historic perspective. They have interest of

narrative as well as suggestiveness of the dramatic. The story in "The Snake Charmer," for example, is simple, grave, and pathetic; but the real power of the study is in its tragic completeness. In such spiritual problems as are discussed in these poems, Dr. Hake faces the difficulties that met Langland in "Piers the Plowman," and Milton in "Samson Agonistes." To the pessimist man may seem to waste his strength for nought, but the deeper reading finds that the true student of Nature—Michael Angelo, the palmist, the soul-painter—may seem to miss his ideal while really advancing to ultimate success. He must grasp his pilgrim staff and resolutely search for Piers the Plowman. The dramatic passion within historical setting is plainly and directly illustrated in the moving "Ecce Homo," in "Michael Angelo" with its phases of aspiration, as the artist zealously perseveres,—

"Eager for heaven, yet oft times faint of heart,
With feet that tremble on the golden stair";

and in such notable studies as "The Soul Painter" and "The Lost Future" in "Legends of the Morrow." It illuminates the touching legends "Ortrud's Vision" and "The First Saved," both in "New Symbols," and it is the moving principle of the poems in "Maiden Ecstasy."

In the soul-pictures of "Maiden Ecstasy" the purpose is to discover "the one true love," and to enshrine that with becoming act of consecration. The study may be in the form of a romantic narrative, as in "The Betrothed," the buoyant and melodious "Dancing Girl," the pathetic "First Love," and the bright and fascinating "Shepherdess" and "Maid of

Song"; it may be the development of a great and consuming spiritual quest, as in "The Visionary," "The Child of Romance," "The Poetess," and the "Sun-Worshipper"; and it may run into such impressive tragic extremes as those in the "Actress" and the "Heart Broken," or into the rare and tremulous spiritual issues of the "Lost Angel," the "Self-conscious," and the "Spirit's Kiss." Still the same theme is illustrated, whatever be the special form of expression: in man there is nothing great but mind, and the highest poetical achievement is to depict intellectual, emotional, and spiritual experience.

In "The Serpent Play," which followed "Maiden Ecstasy," Dr. Hake illustrated his allegorical method in a "divine pastoral." While slightly abstruse this poem displays great intellectual acuteness and spiritual elevation. It is a variation on the dominant theme that evil is a powerful factor in the world, and that the good man conquers by suffering. "He lives the while he dies." Hope becomes possession only through a severe ordeal, suspense in the end being transmuted to perfect joy,—

"High souls death's rusty fetters break,
To the new life awake,
And gather to the chambers of the Blest!"

In "The New Day," a series of ninety-three sonnets, the poet is as rich in idea, as fertile in graceful imagery, as dexterous in phrasology, as melodious in movement, and fully as direct and definite in expression as he has ever been. There are sonnets of charming reminiscence—whetting the interest around old days of the poet with Rossetti

and George Borrow—sonnets nobly enshrining a long and valued friendship; sonnets on aspects of Nature—one on great whales, one on the Alps, and one of delicately beautiful texture on a striking sunset—and sonnets many and valuable on the problem of life from the author's favourite point of view. The form is that of Shakespeare; the thought and movement (as *e.g.* Sonnet xlii. on "Remembered Pleasures") occasionally recall Wordsworth, as the other poems likewise sometimes do; but everywhere stands revealed the notable personality of Dr. Hake. He has always a mind of his own, and is always himself. He is never, indeed, a popular poet in the ordinary acceptance of the phrase—his subtlety, his rapid transitions of thought, his frequent sternness of concision prevent this,—but he is a poet's poet, speaking to men with learned leisure and serious motives, likely to impress the wise and thoughtful. He should command his own particular audience, but they must be those that have ears to hear. There is comfort in this reflection, for it is well in an age that is called materialistic and severely practical if we can still say of a poet's communications, "These things are a mystery."

THOMAS BAYNE.

PARABLES AND TALES.

1872.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

OLD SOULS.

THE world, not hushed, lay as in trance ;
It saw the future in its van,
And drew its riches in advance,
To meet the greedy wants of man ;
Till length of days, untimely sped,
Left its account unaudited.

The sun, untired, still rose and set, —
Swerved not an instant from its beat ;
It had not lost a moment yet,
Nor used in vain its light and heat ;
But, as in trance, from when it rose
To when it sank, man craved repose.

A holy light that shone of yore
He saw, despised, and left behind ;
His heart was rotting to the core
Locked in the slumbers of the mind :
Not beat of drum, nor sound of fife,
Could rouse it to a sense of life.

A cry was heard, intoned and slow,
Of one who had no wares to vend :
His words were gentle, dull and low,
And he called out " Old souls to mend !"
He peddled on from door to door,
And looked not up to rich or poor.

His step kept on as if in pace
With some old timepiece in his head,
Nor ever did its way retrace ;
Nor right nor left turned he his tread,
But uttered still his tinker's cry
To din the ears of passers-by.

So well they knew the olden note
Few heeded what the tinker spake,
Though here and there an ear it smote
And seemed a sudden hold to take ;
But they had not the time to stay,
And it would do some other day.

Still on his way the tinker wends,
Though jobs are far between and few ;
But here and there a soul he mends
And makes it look as good as new.
Once set to work, once fairly hired,
His dull old hammer seems inspired.

Over the task his features glow ;
He knocks away the rusty flakes ;
A spark flies off at every blow ;
At every rap new life awakes.
The soul once cleansed of outward sins,
His subtile handicraft begins.

Like iron unannealed and crude
The soul is plunged into the blast ;
To temper it, however rude,
'Tis next in holy water cast ;
Then on the anvil it receives
The nimblest stroke the tinker gives.

The tinker's task is at an end :

Stamped was the cross by that last blow.
Again his cry, " Old souls to mend ! "

Is heard in accents dull and low.
He pauses not to seek his pay,—
That too will do another day.

One stops and says, " This soul of mine
Has been a tidy piece of ware,
But rust and rot in it combine,
And now corruption lays it bare.
Give it a look : there was a day
When it the morning hymn could say."

The tinker looks into his eye,
And there detects besetting sin,
The decent old-established lie,
That creeps through all the chinks within.
Lank are its tendrils, thick its shoots,
And like a worm's nest coil the roots.

Its flowers a deadly berry bear,
Whose seed, if tended from the pod,
Had grown in beauty with the year,
Like deodara drawn to God ;
Not as the dank and curly brake,
That fosters venom for the snake.

The tinker takes the weed in tow,
And roots it out with tooth and nail ;
His labour patient to bestow,
Lest like the herd of men he fail.
How best to extirpate the weed,
Has grown with him into a creed.

His tack is steady, slow, and sure :
He plucks it out, despite the howl,
With gentle hand and look demure,
As cunning maiden draws a fowl.
He knows the job he is about,
And pulls till all the lie is out.

"Now steadfastly regard the man
Who wrought your cure of rust and rot !
You saw him ere the work began :
Is he the same, or is he not ?
You saw the tinker ; now behold
The Envoy of a God of old."

This said, he on the forehead stamps
The downward stroke and one across,
Then straight upon his way he tramps ;
His time for profit, not for loss ;
His task no sooner at an end
Than out he cries, "Old souls to mend !"

As night comes on he enters doors,
He crosses halls, he goes upstairs,
He reaches first and second floors,
Still busied on his own affairs.
None stop him or a question ask ;
None heed the workman at his task.

Despite his cry "Old souls to mend !"
Which into dull expression breaks,
Not moved are they, nor ear they lend
To him who from old habit speaks ;
Yet does the deep and one-toned cry
Send thrills along eternity.

He gads where out-door wretches walk,
Where outcasts under arches creep ;
Among them holds his simple talk.

He lets them hear him in their sleep.
They who his name have still denied,
He lets them see him crucified.

On royal steps he takes a stand
To light the beauties to the ball ;
He holds a lantern in his hand,
And lets his simple saying fall.
They deem him but some sorry wit
Serving the Holy Spirit's writ.

They know not souls can rust and rot,
And deem him, while he says his say,
The tipsy watchman who forgot
To call out "Carriage stops the way !"
They know not what it can portend,
This mocking cry, "Old souls to mend !"

He stands upon the palace stone,
He is in workhouse, brothel, jail ;
He is to play and ball-room gone,
To hear again the beauties rail ;
With tender pity to behold
The dead alive in pearls and gold.

In meaning deep, in whispers low,
As bubble bursting on the air,
He lets the solemn warning flow
Through jewelled cars of creatures fair,
Who, while they dance, their paces blend
With his mild words, "Old souls to mend !"

And when to church their sins they take,
And bring them back to lunch again ;
And fun of empty sermons make,
He whispers softly in their train ;
And sits with them if two or more
Think of a promise made of yore.

Of those who stay behind to sup,
And in remembrance eat the bread,
He leads the conscience to the cup,
His hands across the table spread.
When contrite hearts before him bend,
Glad are his words, " Old souls to mend ! "

The little ones before the font
He clasps within his arms to bless ;
For Childhood's pure and guileless front
Smiles back his own sweet gentleness.
" Of such," he says, " my kingdom is,
For they betray not with a kiss."

He goes to hear the vicars preach :
They do not always know his face,
Him they pretend the way to teach,
And as one absent, ask his grace.
Not then his words, " Old souls to mend ! "
Their spirits pierce or bosoms rend.

He goes to see the priests revere
His image as he lay in death ;
They do not know that he is there ;
They do not feel his living breath,
Though to his secret they pretend
With incense sweet, old souls to mend.

He goes to hear the grand debate
That makes his own religion law ;
But him the members, as he sate
Below the gangway, never saw,
They used his name to serve their end,
And others left old souls to mend.

Before the church-exchange he stands,
Where those who buy and sell him meet :
He sees his livings changing hands,
And shakes the dust from off his feet.
Maybe his weary head he bows,
While from his side fresh ichor flows.

From mitred peers he turns his face.
Where priests convoked in session plot,
He would remind them of his grace,
But for his now too humble lot ;
So his dull cry on ears devout
He murmurs sadly from without.

He goes where judge the law defends,
And takes the life he can't bestow,
And soul of sinner recommends
To grace above, but not below ;
Reserving for a fresh surprise
Whom it shall meet in Paradise.

He goes to meeting where the saint
Exempts himself from deadly ire,
But in a strain admired and quaint
Consigns all others to the fire,
While of the damned he mocks the howl,
And on the tinker drops his scowl.

Go here, go there, they cite his word,
While he himself is nigh forgot.
He hears them use the name of Lord,
He present though they know him not.
Though he be there, they vision lack,
And talk of him behind his back.

Such is the Church, and such the State.
Both set him up and put him down,—
Below the houses of debate,
Above the jewels of the crown.
But when "Old souls to mend!" he says,
They send him off about his ways.

He is the humble, lowly one,
In coat of rusty velveteen,
Who to his daily work has gone;
In sleeves of lawn not ever seen.
No mitre on his forehead sticks:
His crown is thorny, and it pricks.

On it the dews of mercy shine;
From heaven at dawn of day they fell;
And it he wears by right divine,
Like earthly kings, if truth they tell;
And up to heaven the few to send,
He still cries out, "Old souls to mend!"

NEW SYMBOLS.

1876.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

I.—THE SNAKE-CHARMER.

THE forest rears on lifted arms
Its leafy dome, whence verdurous light
Shakes through the shady depths and warms
Proud tree and stealthy parasite,
There where those cruel coils enclasp
The trunks they strangle in their grasp.

An old man creeps from out the woods,
Breaking the vine's entangling spell ;
He thrids the jungle's solitudes
O'er bamboos rotting where they fell ;
Slow down the tiger's path he wends
Where at the pool the jungle ends.

No moss-greened alley tells the trace
Of his lone step, no sound is stirred,
Even when his tawny hands displace
The boughs, that backward sweep unheard :
His way as noiseless as the trail
Of the swift snake and pilgrim snail.

The old snake-charmer,—once he played
Soft music for the serpent's ear,
But now his cunning hand is stayed ;
He knows the hour of death is near.
And all that live in brake and bough,
All know the brand is on his brow.

Yet where his soul is he must go :
He crawls along from tree to tree.
The old snake-charmer, doth he know
If snake or beast of pray he be ?

Bewildered at the pool he lies
And sees as through a serpent's eyes.

Weeds wove with white-flowered lily crops
 Drink of the pool, and serpents hie
To the thin brink as noonday drops,
 And in the froth-daubed rushes lie.
There rests he now with fastened breath
'Neath a kind sun to bask in death.

The pool is bright with glossy dyes
 And cast-up bubbles of decay :
A green death-leaven overlies
 Its mottled scum, where shadows play
As the snake's hollow coil, fresh shed,
Rolls in the wind across its bed.

No more the wily note is heard
 From his full flute—the riving air
That tames the snake, decoys the bird,
 Worries the she-wolf from her lair.
Fain would he bid its parting breath
Drown in his ears the voice of death.

Still doth his soul's vague longing skim
 The pool beloved : he hears the hiss
That siffles at the sedgy rim,
 Recalling days of former bliss,
And the death-drops, that fall in showers,
Seem honied dews from shady flowers.

There is a rustle of the breeze
 And twitter of the singing bird ;
He snatches at the melodies
 And his faint lips again are stirred :

The olden sounds are in his ears ;
But still the snake its crest uprears.

His eyes are swimming in the mist
That films the earth like serpent's breath :
And now,—as if a serpent hissed,—
The husky whisperings of Death
Fill ear and brain—he looks around—
Serpents seem matted o'er the ground.

Soon visions of past joys bewitch
His crafty soul ; his hands would set
Death's snare, while now his fingers twitch
At tasselled reeds as 'twere his net.
But his thin lips no longer fill
The woods with song ; his flute is still.

Those lips still quaver to the flute,
But fast the life-tide ebbs away ;
Those lips now quaver and are mute,
But nature throbs in breathless play :
Birds are in open song, the snakes
Are watching in the silent brakes.

In sudden fear of snares unseen
The birds like crimson sunset swarm,
All gold and purple, red and green,
And seek each other for the charm.
Lizards dart up the feathery trees
Like shadows of a rainbow breeze.

The wildered birds again have rushed
Into the charm,—it is the hour
When the shrill forest-note is hushed,
And they obey the serpent's power,—

Drawn to its gaze with troubled whirr,
As by the thread of falconer.

As 'twere to feed, on slanting wings
They drop within the serpent's glare :
Eyes flashing fire in burning rings
Which spread into the dazzled air ;
They flutter in the glittering coils :
The charmer dreads the serpent's toils.

While Music swims away in death
Man's spell is passing to his slaves :
The snake feeds on the charmer's breath,
The vulture screams, the parrot raves,
The lone hyena laughs and howls,
The tiger from the jungle growls.

Then mounts the eagle—flame-flecked folds
Belt its proud plumes ; a feather falls :
He hears the death-cry, he beholds
The king-bird in the serpent's thralls,
He looks with terror on the feud,—
And the sun shines through dripping blood.

The deadly spell a moment gone—
Birds, from a distant Paradise,
Strike the winged signal and have flown,
Trailing rich hues through azure skies :
The serpent falls ; like demon wings
The far-out branching cedar swings.

The wood swims round ; the pool and skies
Have met ; the death-drops down that cheek
Fall faster ; for the serpent's eyes
Grow human, and the charmer's seek.

A gaze like man's directs the dart
Which now is buried at his heart.

The monarch of the world is cold :
The charm he bore has passed away :
The serpent gathers up its fold
To wind about its human prey.
The red mouth darts a dizzy sting,
And clenches the eternal ring.

II.—THE BIRTH OF VENUS.

THE waters of the warm, surf-laden sea,
Couched 'neath a heaven of love that o'er them bends,
Lie trance-bound in a dream of ecstasy,
Prophetic of a rapture that impends.

Now they swell up as if love's underflow
Lifted their bosom, the sun's shredded fires,
Glinting each tremor ; now, with pulses low,
They lapse into a deluge of desires.

The sun glares on his way across the deep,
And, bounding to the zenith's utmost height,
There vacillates and from his fiery steep
Burns in his pride on ocean to alight.

The procreative ether downward floats
On slanting beams that pierce the dazzled sky,
And nature kindles as the vivid motes
With crackling germs her rage beatify.

The wombs of nature, in their several spheres,
With rival love new beauty generate :
The fruitful earth a swollen harvest bears,
But yearns for more beneath her bursting weight.

With teemful breasts, in innocence unchaste,
She still the yielding elements distrains,
And runs her over-mellowness to waste,
While on her lap one cluster yet remains.

The sun has sunk, in his voluptuous heat
Creaming with rosy love the ocean floor,
Till only serried waves his blush repeat
As they uprise and froth the pulpy shore.

The stars revolve in pairs, the fiery red
Infect the deathly pale with new desires,
And downward whirled upon the ocean-bed
Assail its floods with phosphor-dripping fires.

Nature's imperious passions intertwine
And one great spirit moves upon the sea :
With silver light the emerald waters shine
Along the procreant path of Deity.

Where the charmed moon a milder day has shed,
Venus, the love-star, burns : her virgin gifts
From heaven to those blest waters she hath sped ;
Wave over wave her paler image drifts.

Then night in purple dusk descends and holds
The earth and skies apart, all dim between :
A firmament deep-hidden in its folds
Shines densely at love's festival, unseen.

There heaven the holy hymen celebrates—
When all the crowded galaxy appears :
A flash has opened the horizon's gates
And through them sweeps the concert of the spheres.

The lighted waters answer to the skies ;
The distant music seems to re-ascend,
And spreads in echoes whose soft melodies,
Skimming the flood, in silent zephyrs end.

All passion dies, or, burning still remote,
Narrows its sphere, and, mirrored from above,
Deseends asleep in fairy dreams that float
Into the pensive image of its love.

And now, lest nature slumber o'er desire,
The molten passions part, the winds are free,
The sweltered air inflames, the flashing fire
Darts at the jealous, fierce uprising sea.
The curdled foam whitens the watery night,
Froths up the weeds that, hurried on amain,
Like congregated porpoises in flight,
Are heaped in shoals upon the furrowed plain.

There falls a daylight of celestial lull;
But fields are ravaged, the ripe, glistening wheat
That travelled in the breezes, ears shock-full,
Lies on the ground as by a handflail beat.

Woods have flung up their secret roots, embowered
On their bruised boughs, and yet with whirling rush
Rapacious floods from virgin hills deflowered
Strew the snatched blossoms and the meadows flush.

A moist, heart-ripening calm has come to rot
Delved shores, despoiled by the unnatural wave
And swarming with sea monsters ill-begot
That crawl to perish, lacking all they crave.

Sea-weeds are piled in stacks upon the beach,
And crisp as fuel for the hungry sun.
The rocks whose climbing paths the welkin reach,
Lashed by the waves, with foam are overrun.

Mermaids lie dead along the wreck-strewn sands,
Pitched by high waves upon the ocean-side,
With snapt-off boughs of coral in their hands,—
Their scaly folds frothed in the panting tide.

Over the quiet sea rides on his back
The sun-stained dolphin, there, in lifeless ease,
Tossed up and down 'mid isles of bladder-wrack
Wrenched with their shell-fish from the weeded seas.
But in one bay, held by the nymphs that bathe
In its translucent pools and love to view
Their dripping hair and bosom, while they swathe
Their waists in coral spangled by the dew,
Or twist green garlands round them for a shrine,
Culling the briny flowers with pearl inwove,
That unctuous cling as tendrils of a vine
And weave a bower for newly-budded love ;—
In such a bay, where bluest waters buoy
Leaves coral-mown and froth of bubbling white,
Where the dipped rays o'er shallow rocks deploy
And film soft honeycombs of shaking light ;—
Lo ! There bright golden ringlets interlace :
A rosy hand athwart a bosom gleams,
Then sweeps the surf, and thence looks forth a face
As if at length inheriting its dreams.
She rises from the pool in half eclipse,
Knotting the weeds that circle her about,
While the morn's kisses meet her coral lips
Now stirred, now closed in beauty's luscious pout.
Under her rose-dipped feet the mirror shows
A form divine enamelled in the sky :
Smile after smile along the water flows
And ripples as she gazes stealthily.
Love, the bright image of her virgin soul,
Kindles the dreamy depths, is thence upborne
To the impassioned heaven, and o'er the whole
Of the rapt world reddens the blush of morn.

LEGENDS OF THE MORROW.

1879.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

I.—THE PALMIST.

THROUGH the tired twilight hour strange
meanings stole ;

The wanton waves their living loads had tossed
From rock to hollow : towards the sandy shoal
The youthful palmist crossed,
While sterner things than thought from Nature's soul
Were voiced abroad and lost.

It was the hour when, balanced in the sky,
Three rival orbs of heaven have burning speech,
And paths that in their rare conjunction lie
To mortal vision reach ;
It was the hour when Fate's serene reply
Is branded on the beach.

There have the ruthless seas heaped up their sheaves,
But o'er the wasted spoil no longer rave,
All solemn as the pile that earth upheaves
At man's remembered grave ;
The curious moon, half rising, interweaves
In heaven a blood-red wave.

"Where falls my lot ?" the palmist asks : "I tread
These sands and wait on heaven's my only guide,
Whose marvels crowd the sky, and, as they spread,
Man's destiny decide."

The sunset-glow was dreaming of the dead
While watching out the tide.

A star, all fire, in the pale sapphire shines ;
Soul-mute the seer rests on the tranced strand—
And strives to spell the ribbed and gilded lines

Scored on the virgin sand,
As one heart-lone the fretted life divines
On some fair maiden's hand.
A maiden's hand ! Why turn his troubled eyes ?
Amid his toils of thought a shade has stole
O'er those pale sandy wastes, now seems to rise
Now vanish through his soul.
'Tis there ; a shadow-hand before him lies,
And lingers on the shoal.
With virgin hand held out 'mid things to be,
A maiden cries, " I saw in dreams a seer
Reading the sands beside an awful sea,
Even as I see thee here.
Where is he ?—wherefore came I unto thee ?—
He knows why dreams appear."
So lovely, and her dream within her still
That o'er her eyes its drowsing beauty shed,
Her ominous words through all his senses thrill ;
She seems an angel sped
Not in the wistful service of her will
But by a vision led.
" Wake," said he, " from the wonders of thy sleep,
And hear the things thy vision doth portend.
Doom breaks upon us in its meanings deep,
While these charmed hours impend :
Across thy palm its pure revealings sweep,
And with our future blend."
Is it herself or heaven the virgin fears ?
In vain she looks for guidance in his face.
His eyes are turned from hers, his gaze appears
To burn its way in space—
And, lo ! a flash from heaven the warning bears,
Thy perilous steps retrace !

Too late ; deep passion smoulders in her eyes,
That drooping yet the more her love reveal :
She asks, why bade he, in his reveries,
This passion to her steal ?
The heavens reply ; behind the distant skies
The thunder-echoes reel.
But he enrapt seeks not through love or fear
The high forbidden portents to divine—
He takes the virgin's hand, he draws her near,
He threads each burning line.
And through her spotless soul, to heaven still dear,
He reads each thrilling sign.
Why pales the palmist's check ? what dreads he now ?
His lips, unsealed, the cruel doom betray :
" This breath-dimmed coronet awaits thy brow,
And still the symbols say
That heaven records of thee a broken vow
Given on thy bridal day."
She stands woe-stricken, but his eyes can see
Only the rifted future ravening nigh,
His lips can only utter the decree
He wrests from power on high,
Which comes with sudden rush of things to be,
And voiceless shudders by.
" I see o'er all thy youth fierce passion break :
Hearts burn for thee, all riches on thee shower ;
I see thy love to endless change awake :
To thee belongs the hour !
Here doth no hand thy triumphs overtake,
No shadow on thee lower.
" A king at last thy slave, all sway is thine.
As votive stars in sinking still adore,
His eyes, whereon first broke thy love divine,

The wave of night rolls o'er ;
In memory's hopeless prison doth he pine
And look on thee no more.

"Thy arms, soft flowing as the sea at eve,
Wind round all hearts, but, like the coiling wave,
Upon the shoal their fated burden leave,
No hand held up to save ;
And now these depths of passion cease to heave,
And flood thy early grave."

"O God, what have I done ?" she cries aloud ;
"As once, am not I ever safe with Thee ?
Shame follows shame as waves each other crowd
Upon the ruthless sea !
Sooner, this beauty to the dust be bowed
And the rocks cover me !"

But he whose maddened brow above her bends,
Heeds not her cry,—hushed in that mournful roar,
The rushing of the hollow wind that rends
Fate's far-off troubled shore ;
Heard only where the soul's procession ends
At death's wide open door.

Roused from a trance of grief, as by a brand
That scores upon her palm all woman's pain,
She shrinks in anguish, and withdraws her hand :
He saw the fiery stain—
And, lo ! a shadow from the far-off strand
Points while he reads again.

"He that reveals thy fate this hour is thine,
But loving till all love shall cease to be,
Beneath thy shadow-hand is left to pine
And look no more on thee—

"O God !" he cries, "how awful is Thy Sign !
Her first love falls to me !"

MAIDEN ECSTASY.

1880.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

THE FIRST LOVE.

A NYMPH of laughter and her playmate boy
Knew in their youth a love already old,
Though in the safety of its perfect joy
It lingered still untold.

Her heart was his heart's friend, so closely knit,
A spark let fall on one, the fire had spread
And a new passion lit
To burn into the lips in friendship's stead.

With crown and gryphons blazoned, high enrolled
Amid strange lists of station, was her name;
Not so his own; and he his love controlled
Till he had seized on fame.

As sisters on a brother's love rely,
So lets she not her fancy rove in quest
Of rich-toned flattery,
But in her home finds hourly-smiling rest.

Yet is her dream one day to wedded be
Unto his like, which many knew who sought
This lively maid, for in her heart was he
Her one all-guiding thought.
So, self-betrayed, had others learnt her choice;
Had feigned by turns his glad and sombre mood;
And with his ringing voice
Or sober looks, as chanced, her steps pursued.

But her heart too had caught his changeful way,
So 'gainst her seeming fickleness who strove
Lost by to-morrow all they won to-day :
There was no place for love.
Whether, all truth, no subtle arts they feign
Or mould their grace to please her in his stead,
All follow her in vain :
Heartless she seems, unwilling to be wed.

Her playmate, oft at sea, brings back to shore
The missing charm, when twofold merriment
Springs up, as if one half their joy he bore
Whether he came or went.
And, though he leave, 'tis as a brother leaves,
For where joy is can no mischance appear :
'Tis but the heart which grieves
That fails to see a distant time as near.

Long was he absent, and her parents said
" 'Tis time to fix your heart and give your bond :
In her full beauty should a maiden wed
And think of life beyond."
They urge her ; she surveys the world in vain :
Ere she can love must she his likeness know
But only meets again
Memories of joy no other can bestow.

At length one of the many brings the gifts
Seen but in one before ; so bright, so rare :
Towardshim her heart, though anchored, slowly drifts ;
She meets the absent there.
Sea-battles, storms, escapes, adventures few
Has he to tell her ; home-won victories
His path of peace bestrew,
And draw for him at last the promised prize.

As with the peach, two kernels in their stone
Lie closely hidden 'neath one luscious rind,
So with this maid ; two hearts, that are not one,
Are in her breast enshrined,
That for the hour with full affection teems,
As doth a mother's who the feeble child
Still living priceless deems,
Until a stronger on her love has smiled.

But like a fairy garden 'neath filmed ice
That shuts in half a flower, her love-dreams melt,
And vanishes the little paradise
That did her prospect belt.
Upon the peaceful sea at anchor rides
A war-ship, and her first love steps on shore,
When woe her heart betides,
Which sinks, as drowning, at the cannon's roar.

His life-affection, loosed from its controul,
He tells her, and she listens in dismay :
Ere all the raptured words escape his soul
Her senses sink away.
From her white face the shifting bloom has fled
And sends up her heart's shadow to those cheeks,
Déserting her for dead,
When o'er her brow, in drops, the anguish breaks.

'Twas nigh the beach, his flagship full in view,
He told her how for love he fought
When the grand vessel into battle flew
And won the prize he sought.
Now as a sea-king's was his will obeyed :
But glory, what avails it, what is fame
Unless his loving maid
Share with him all his honours and his name ?

She clasps her bosom, flies from place to place
Heedless of where her tears fast falling drop ;
As though a sobbing sky came o'er her face
They never seem to stop.
Then in her dire distress, besought to speak,
She only whispers, "No, it cannot be ;"
But looks around to seek
Some voice that yet may turn her destiny.
"O God !" he cries, "Through all these hopeful years
Your love has been my lode-star ; not in vain !"
The gust of words has driven back her tears ;
Her kisses fall like rain.
Her lips are maddened, both her arms embrace
His neck with a rude rapture, while her cheeks
Fondle his welcome face,
And turn his lips to kisses when he speaks.

SONNET.

THE INFANT MEDUSA.

BY POSEIDON.

I LOVED Medusa when she was a child,
Her rich brown tresses heaped in crispy curl
Where now those locks with reptile passion whirl,
By hate into dishevelled serpents coiled.
I loved Medusa when her eyes were mild,
Whose glances, narrowed now, perdition hurl,
As her self-tangled hairs their mass unfurl,
Bristling the way she turns with hissings wild.
Her mouth I kissed when curved with amorous spell,
Now shaped to the unuttered curse of hell,
Wide open for death's orbs to freeze upon ;
Her eyes I loved ere glazed in icy stare,
Ere mortals, lured into their ruthless glare,
She shrivelled in her gaze to pulseless stone.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

I.—THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

THE day but not the bride is come,
As in her blossom-time ;
But golden lights sustain the home
She cherished in her prime.

May we not call upon the band ?
May we not ask the priest ?
Our golden wedding is at hand,
And we shall hold a feast.

But where is he in snow-white stole
Who the old service read,
That made us one in heart and soul ?
Long, long has he been dead.

The bridesmaids clad in silken fold
Who waited on the bride,
Where are they now ? Their tale is told :
Long, long ago they died.

Where is the groomsman, chosen friend,
The true, the well-beloved ?
His term, alas ! is at an end ;
Too soon was he removed.

Where is the bride, ah ! such a bride
As every joy foretells ?
I see her walking by my side,
I hear the wedding-bells.

Where is she now ? That we should say
She did not live to know
How passed her silver wedding-day,
So many years ago !

But come, and for your mother's sake,
Though vain it were to weep,
Let us the silent feast partake,
Her golden wedding keep.

II.—DEAF AND DUMB.

SHE has no voice, her lips are still,
Our words she cannot hear :
We watch her with the silent thrill
That calls the soul to prayer.
No joys that we in common have
Her spirit can intone :
She cannot hear another's love,
She cannot speak her own.
Sweet-sounding thoughts, that never passed
Her lips, fill up her smile,
And on her face a brightness cast,—
As when words pause awhile.
With her, as with the angel-kind,
Her thoughts can swiftly reach
All hearts, in converse of the mind,
And need not human speech.
Her voice is not of earth, to stir
The frantic chords of love ;
It is a keepsake lent by her
Unto the choirs above.
Beyond the portal of her ear
Our words must never wind,
Lest erring thoughts should there appear
And evil be divined.
But when her eyes their love recount,
What words into us come !
As by a sermon on the mount
Our lips are stricken dumb.

Lord Houghton.

1809—1885.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES (afterwards Baron Houghton) was born on the 19th of June, 1809, and was descended from an ancient Yorkshire family. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he made friendships with such men as Arthur Hallam, Tennyson, John Sterling, and R. C. Trench. Possessed of wealth, of high connections, extraordinary social charm, a handsome person, sympathetic and most winning manners, remarkable culture, genuine love of Art in all its manifestations, Milnes became a great personage in society. As a Member of Parliament from 1837 to 1863, when he was created Baron Houghton, he contributed not a little to the advance of social questions. He was early in his career an advocate of Popular Education, and he carried through the House of Commons a bill establishing Reformatories for juvenile criminals. Throughout his long life his advocacy and influence were always on the side of social improvement. Witness his essays on the Admission of the Working Classes to Political and Social Power and on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. His own words show his feeling on this matter when he speaks of—

“A sense of an earnest Will
To help the lowly-living,—
And a terrible heart-thrill
If you have no power of giving ;

An arm of aid to the weak,
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind words—so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless”:

In those simple words we have the reflection of one facet of the mind of this many-sided man. It may be truly said of Milnes—that he was ever ready to stretch out, not merely a hand to the friendless when friendship or kindness were requested from him; but more may be said: he sought out—he counted it a privilege to help with advice, sympathy, and generous bounty. It was with him “more blessed to give than to receive.” An accomplished scholar himself, with great knowledge of and delight in Art of whatever character, it was his especial pleasure to give early recognition to promising but often struggling aspirants whether in Art, Literature, or the Drama. He often noted promise when a careless or contemptuous critic passed by on the other side, and few of his contemporaries of any mark or likelihood failed of those

“Kind words—so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless.”

The close and constant friend of Arthur Helps, it is generally believed that he was the original of one of that delightful set of characters in “*Friends in Council*”; and it was said of him that he had only to hear that any friend had fallen into misfortune, or committed some mistake, in order at once to invite him to breakfast, that more substantial help and sympathy might be pressed on him.

It is not surprising that a man so accomplished, and possessing that absolute essential for poetry—

Sympathy, in such large measure—should have found utterance for some of his feelings and reflections in metrical composition, and for a time he may be said to have stood at the head of that body of elegant versifiers whose compositions, for want of a better classification, are called “Vers de Société.

This kind of literature is sometimes contemned; but when one thinks of the excellence that has been reached in “The Rape of the Lock,” it has surely been mistakenly judged. There is poetry of an absorbing character, and dealing with such exalted themes that, like that of Milton, it should, as Charles Lamb finely observed, “have a grace said before it”; there is, however, a large class of subjects relating to contemporary life and manners, opinions perhaps of a transitory and fleeting character, that yet may be charmingly and appropriately treated in metrical language. Milnes reached distinct success in this kind of composition. His lyrics improve the understanding, improve the heart, and soothe the reflection, and they possess three excellent properties—correct fancy, correct order, and correct metre. As was well said of him in the *Edinburgh Review* (vol. cxi., 1874): “Milnes possesses a stronger and fresher air than belong to the poets of society generally. Music and thought are what he gives us, rather than point or dashing description. In his quiet strains we come sometimes upon reflections of considerable depth, and the shadow of the literary devotee always falls athwart his pages. We like his utter freedom from artificiality. His range of poetic powers is not of the highest order; but there is scarcely a poet who could be named who has done so uniformly well in all themes selected for treat-

ment. Those who attach no merit to dealing with ordinary and every-day subjects, might attempt to detract from Lord Houghton's praise by affirming that he too often recurs to such topics; but it ought to be recognised fully that it requires no ordinary gift to treat of homely things in a successful manner. And he has the especial merit of looking beneath the surface of things, and touching the springs of life and thought which are in the heart."

Simple as it is, all of us remember with pleasure "The beating of my own heart, was all the sound I heard." Charming as is this simple ballad, and simply beautiful as is "Good Night and Good Morning," Milnes was capable of touching very deep chords in the human breast. How pathetic is the picture of Sir Walter Scott, in his fading hours, at the Tomb of the Stuarts in St. Peter's:—

" Thus face to face, the dying and the dead,
Bound in one solemn ever-living bond,
Communed ; and I was sad that ancient head
Ever should pass those holy walls beyond."

Take again his lines addressed to Venice in his "Meditative Fragments." Is there not beauty here?

. . . "joy is mine,
That I have read and learnt thee as I ought,
Not in the crude compiler's painted shell,
But in thine own memorials of live stone,
And in the pictures of thy kneeling princes,
And in the lofty words on lofty tombs,
And in the breath of ancient chroniclers,
And in the music of the outer sea."

These lines would do no shame to Wordsworth himself. His genius may be "receptive rather than creative"; but receptivity had reached a very high

mark indeed when it dictated that beautiful poem "Never Return." It is a gem. There are lines in it that will linger long in the ears of lovers of verse :—

"And now he spoke, at first with trem'ulous voice,
Softened, as if it passed through inner tears."

Can any one read with a dry eye that most pathetic of all his poems, "Strangers yet"? There is pathos too in "Second Childhood," and power in "The Northern Knight in Italy."

In the preface to his collected poetical works (Murray, 1876), he said he had often thought he would like to review his own poems, conscious that the distance of time and the alterations of temperament qualified him to do so with impartiality. He did not proceed to do so; but he claimed for "The Long Ago," "The Men of Old," "The Worth of Hours," "Happiness," "Domestic Fame," "Never Return," "Requiescat in Pace," and "Strangers yet,"—standing (as he alleged they did) "on a firm, ethical basis, and aiming at an apt and melodious representation of conditions of thought and emotion which men do not willingly surrender or forget,"—an interest for a wide circle of humanity.

Restraint and sobriety with great elegance characterise all he writes; but Milnes was not untouched by the Doubt and Despair of his time :—

"Now no more in tuneful motion
Life with love and duty glides;
Reason's meteor-lighted ocean
Bears us down its mazy tides;
Head is clear and hand is strong,
But our heart no haven knows;
Sun of Truth! the night is long,
Let thy radiance interpose."

His sonnet "Happiness" may be read with interest and pleasure in this connection:—

"Because the Few with signal virtue crowned,
The heights and pinnacles of human mind,
Sadder and wearier than the rest are found,
Wish not thy Soul less wise or less refined.
True that the small delights which every day
Cheer and distract the pilgrim are not theirs ;
True that, though free from Passion's lawless sway,
A loftier being brings severer cares.
Yet have they special pleasures, even mirth,
By those undreamt of who have only trod
Life's valley smooth ; and if the rolling earth
To their nice ear have many a painful tone,
They know, Man does not live by Joy alone,
But by the presence of the power of God."

Our notice may fitly conclude with this, perhaps unconscious, portrait of himself:—

" Amid the factions of the field of life
The poet held his little neutral ground ;
And they who mixed the deepest in the strife,
Their evening way to his seclusion found.
There meeting oft th' antagonists of the day,
Who near in mute defiance seemed to stand,
He said what neither would be first to say,
And, having spoken, left them hand in hand."

Lord Houghton died at Vichy on August 11th, 1885.

H. J. GIBBS.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

LORD HOUGHTON.

I.—THE BROOK-SIDE.

1830.

I WANDERED by the brook-side,
I wandered by the mill,—
I could not hear the brook flow,
The noisy wheel was still ;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beside the elm-tree,
I watched the long, long shade,
And as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid
For I listened for a footfall,
I listened for a word,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not,—no, he came not,—
The night came on alone,—
The little stars sat one by one,
Each on his golden throne ;
The evening air passed by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirr'd,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind,—
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind :

It drew me nearer—nearer,—
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

II.—GOOD-NIGHT AND GOOD-MORNING.

A FAIR little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see :
Then smoothed her work, and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, Good-night ! Good-night !"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying "Caw ! caw !" on their way to bed :
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things ! Good-night ! Good-night !"

The horses neighed, and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "Bleat ! bleat !" came over the road :
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl ! Good-night ! Good night !"

She did not say to the sun "Good-night !"
Though she saw him there, like a ball of light ;
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink fox-glove bowed his head—
The violet curtsied and went to bed ;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said, on her knees, her favourite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay
She knew nothing more 'till again it was day :
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
Good-Morning ! Good-Morning ! our work is begun !

III.—THE MEN OF OLD.

I KNOW not that the men of old
Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
Of more ingenuous brow :
I heed not those who pine for force
A ghost of Time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
Of these appointed days.
Still it is true, and over true,
That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
And let my thoughts repose
On all that humble happiness,
The world has since forgone,—
The daylight of contentedness
That on those faces shone !
With rights, tho' not too closely scanned,
Enjoyed, as far as known,—
With will by no reverse unmanned,—
With pulse of even tone,—
They from to-day and from to-night
Expected nothing more,
Than yesterday and yesternight
Had proffered them before.
To them was life a simple art
Of duties to be done,
A game where each man took his part,
A race where all must run ;
A battle whose great scheme and scope
They little cared to know,
Content, as men at arms, to cope
Each with his fronting foe.

Man *now* his Virtue's diadem
Puts on, and proudly wears,
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
Like instincts, unawares :
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
With tasks of every day,
They went about their gravest deeds,
As noble boys at play.—

And what if Nature's fearful wound
They did not probe and bare,
For that their spirits never swooned
To watch the misery there,—
For that their love but flowed more fast,
Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
Into the evil sea.

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet,
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet :
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire,—
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh Desire.

But, Brothers, who up Reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer,—
O ! loiter not, those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear ;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

IV.—THE LONG-AGO.

1834.

EYES which can but ill define
Shapes that rise about and near,
Through the far horizon's line
Stretch a vision free and clear :
Memories feeble to retrace
Yesterday's immediate flow,
Find a dear familiar face
In each hour of Long-ago.
Follow yon majestic train
Down the slopes of old renown,
Knightly forms without disdain,
Sainted heads without a frown ;
Emperors of thought and hand
Congregate, a glorious show,
Men from every age and land
In the plains of Long-ago.
As the heart of childhood brings
Something of eternal joy,
From its own unsounded springs
Such as life can scarce destroy ;
So, remindful of the prime
Spirits, wand'ring to and fro,
Rest upon the resting time
In the peace of Long-ago.
Youthful Hope's religious fire,
When it burns no longer, leaves
Ashes of impure Desire
On the altars it bereaves ;
But the light that fills the Past
Sheds a still diviner glow,
Ever farther it is cast
O'er the scenes of Long-ago.

Many a growth of pain and care,
Cumbering all the present hour,
Yields, when once transplanted there,
Healthy fruit or pleasant flower ;
Thoughts that hardly flourish here,
Feelings long have ceased to blow,
Breathe a native atmosphere
In the world of Long-ago.

On that deep-retiring shore
Frequent pearls of beauty lie,
Where the passion-waves of yore
Fiercely beat and mounted high :
Sorrows that are sorrows still
Lose the bitter taste of woe ;
Nothing's altogether ill
In the griefs of Long-ago.

Tombs where lonely love repines,
Ghastly tenements of tears,
Wear the look of happy shrines
Through the golden mist of years ;
Death, to those who trust in good,
Vindicates his hardest blow ;
Oh ! we would not, if we could,
Wake the sleep of Long-ago !

Though the doom of swift decay
Shocks the soul where life is strong,
Though for frailer hearts the day
Lingers sad and overlong,
Still the weight will find a leaven,
Still the spoiler's hand is slow,
While the Future has its Heaven,
And the Past, its Long-ago.

V.—THE WORTH OF HOURS.

1835.

BELIEVE not that your inner eye
Can ever in just measure try
The worth of Hours as they go by :

For every man's weak self, alas !
Makes him to see them, while they pass,
As through a dim or tinted glass :

But if in earnest care you would
Metre out to each its part of good,
Trust rather to your after-mood.

Those surely are not fairly spent
That leave your spirit bowed and bent
In sad unrest and ill-content :

And more,—though free from seeming harm,
You rest from toil of mind or arm,
Or slow retire from Pleasure's charm,—

If then a painful sense comes on
Of something wholly lost and gone,
Vainly enjoyed, or vainly done,—

Of something from your being's chain
Broke off, nor to be linked again
By all mere Memory can retain,—

Upon your heart this truth may rise,—
Nothing that altogether dies
Suffices man's just destinies :

So should we live, that every Hour
May die as dies the natural flower,—
A self-reviving thing of power ;

That every Thought and every Deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future meed ;

Esteeming Sorrow, whose employ
Is to develope not destroy,
Far better than a barren Joy.

VI.—STRANGERS YET.

1865.

STRANGERS yet !
After years of life together,
After fair and stormy weather,
After travel in fair lands,
After touch of wedded hands,—
Why thus joined ? why ever met,
If they must be strangers yet ?

Strangers yet !
After childhood's winning ways,
After care and blame and praise,
Counsel asked and wisdom given,
After mutual prayers to Heaven,
Child and parent scarce regret
When they part—are strangers yet.

Strangers yet !

After strife for common ends,
After title of "old friends,"
After passions fierce and tender,
After cheerful self-surrender,
Hearts may beat and eyes be met,
And the souls be strangers yet.

Strangers yet !

Oh ! the bitter thought to scan
All the loneliness of man :—
Nature, by magnetic laws,
Circle unto circle draws,
But they only touch when met,
Never mingle—strangers yet.

Strangers yet !

Will it evermore be thus—
Spirits still impervious ?
Shall we never fairly stand
Soul to soul as hand to hand ?
Are the bounds eternal set
To retain us—strangers yet ?

Strangers yet !

Tell not Love it must aspire
Unto something other—higher :
God Himself were loved the best
Were our sympathies at rest,
Rest above the strain and fret
Of the world of—strangers yet !
Strangers yet !

VII.—SHADOWS.

I.

THEY owned their passion without shame or fear,
And every household duty counted less
Than that one spiritual bond, and men severe
Said they should sorrow for their wilfulness.

And truth the world went ill with them ; he knew
That he had broken up her maiden life,
Where only pleasures and affections grew,
And sowed it thick with labour, pain and strife.

What her unpractis'd weakness was to her
The presence of her suffering was to him ;
Thus at Love's feast did Misery minister,
And fill their cups together to the brim.

They asked their kind for hope, but there was none,
Till Death came by and gave them that and more ;
Then men lamented,—but the earth rolls on,
And lovers love and perish as before.

II.

They seemed to those who saw them meet
The casual friends of every day,
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame,
Would struggle like a captured bird :

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears,—
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years !

Alas! that love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride!
Alas! that they delayed so long
The goal of mutual bliss beside.
Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

IX.—DOMESTIC FAME.

WHY is the Grave so silent? Why is the Tomb
so dead?

Wherefore this gloomy secret on each departed
head?

Why do we name them seldom, and then with
voices low,

As if some shame were on them, or superhuman
woe?

Were Death the sleep eternal that some despairing
feign,

Had never Faith engendered the hope to meet
again,—

Still why should this great absence obliterate with
its tears

The happiest recollections and sympathies of years?

Oh no! Death could not banish the love that lived
complete,

And passed away untarnished to its celestial seat!

Oh no! tis not the living that we should harshly
blame,

But that men lightly cherish their pure domestic fame.

How few leave not behind them some cause to bless
the tomb,

That mercifully closes, and pardons in its gloom !

How few go from us, leaving the thoughts of them
so dear,

That aye the prayer besets us, " O God ! that they
were here ! "

So that in distant evenings, when joyous faces glow
About the Christmas firelight and laughter melts
the snow,—

In pauses of the revel, some heart without a fear,
Will passionately murmur—" Ah ! why are they not
here ? "

Or that in weary seasons, when sickness racks the
brain,

And lordly Reason falters, and Will is only pain,—

Those whom they loved to counsel may mystically
hear

Their voices leading onwards the path they trod
when here :

Or that in awful moments, when evil scenes set free
To tempt mankind to question what God of Truth
there be,—

The sense how *they*, too, strove and conquered,
serves to cheer

The struggler, dimly conscious of spirits watching near.

Not, then, to Heroes only, to Poet, Statesman, King,
Let care of future glory its anxious duties bring

There is no name so lowly, that may not raise
a shrine

Of living hearts, to honour its memory as Divine !

POEMS.

LORD HOUGHTON.

I.—NEVER RETURN!

1847.

IT was a meeting, such as on this earth
The bonds of time and circumstance permit
Rarely to those who feel and think as one :
A small but "sacred band" wholly made up
Of lovers—of old friends who had not met
For many weary years—of some whose names
Had to each other been familiar sounds,
And who now felt their spirits meet and join
At once, like waters—and of four who formed
Two complete beings, man and woman blent,
Ensamples of connubial unity.

This wondrous concert of internal life
Went on beneath the open infinite
Of an Italian sky, that varied not
More than the peace that dwelt within their souls ;
So that when, all at once, before their eyes
The lake grew less transparent, and the leaves
Of the pale olive less distinguishable,
And the hill glow'd like metal, while the snow
First turned to gold, then red, then deadly white,
They were astonished at the flight of time
That had not struck one hour within their hearts ;
And amid all the riches of that South,
They grudged the North its solitary charm
Of long, long twilight, mourning bitterly
That here the day was ravished from their eyes,
And bore a world of bliss along with it.
At last one rose, one younger than the rest,
One before whom life lay a glorious stream
Flowing, by right divine, through pleasant lands,

Unconscious of the fatal final sea,
He stood irradiate with that rosy light,
The funeral banner of the fallen sun,
Most like an image of incarnate Hope,
From whom no night can hide the coming morn.

Raising one arm in ecstasy, he cried,—
“Before we leave this concentrated spot,
Before this Day of Days is wholly dead,
Before the dew obliterates all our steps
From this light earth, let us record a vow !
Let us, in presence of these lasting hills,
In presence of this day’s delicious thoughts,
That yet are hardly memory,—let us pledge
Our hearts together, that on this same day
Each rolling year shall see us meet again
In this same place, as far as Fate allows.
Some may be held away by cruel chance,
Some by the great divorcer, none by choice ;
And thus, at least for a large lapse of time,
One Day shall stand apart from other days,
Birth-day of inward Life—Love’s Holyday—
The Wedding-day, not of one single pair,
But of a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys,—
The Saints-day, in whose fair recurrent round
Each year will circle all its blessedness.”

With more than ready welcome, with loud glee,
Was hailed this happy fancy ; each was prompt
To press the other’s hand, and joining round
The founder of this mighty festival,
To seal the sudden contract—all save One.

This one had gazed on the impassioned youth
With tender looks, that to the rest had seemed
Fond sympathy,—but had far other sense.
And now he spoke, at first with trem’lous voice,

Softened, as if it passed through inner tears.
"O Friends! dear Friends! do anything but this :
This is a deed to wake the jealous gods
Into a cruel vengeance. We are Men :
We live from hour to hour, and have no right,
Holding no power, to fetter future years.
We may, if Heaven so please, preserve our lives,
We may enjoy our interchange of souls
Long, and in many shapes of time and fate ;
But to this spot, the scene of this To-day,
Let us, whate'er befall, never return !
"Never return! If hitherward your path
Should chance to lie, when seeking other lands,
Spare not the time it takes to circuit round
This scene, and gaze upon its face no more.
Say, if you will, "It lies amid the gold
The sunset spreads beyond that purple ridge ;"
Say, if you will, "The atoms of this stream
Flow through the place I value most on earth,
And bear my yearning heart along with them :"
Say, if you will, "There rests my Paradise ;"
But there, whate'er befall, never return !
"Never return! Should we come back, dear Friend ;
As you implore us, *we* should not return :
Came we all back, as Heaven would hardly grant,
There must be faded cheeks and sunken eyes,
And minds enfeebled with the rack of time,
And hearts grown colder, and, it may be, cold.
The sun might shine as gorgeous as this noon,
And yet find clouds between it and our souls ;
The lake might rest like light upon the earth,
And but reflect to us sweet faces gone,
And pictures mournful as the dead below ;
The very flow'rs might breathe a poisonous breath

Should we, led by false hope, ever return !
"Trust not the dear palladium of the Past
Upon the Future's breast. The Past is ours,
And we can build a temple of rare thoughts,
Adorned with all affection's tracery,
In which to keep from contact vile and rude
The grace of this incomparable Day.
We may, by heart, go through it all again ;
We may, with it, give colour, warmth, and form
To the black, shapeless mountains far away —
Calm down the seething, hyperborean, waves
To the pure sapphire of this lake, and spread
Rose-trellises across the gloomy front
Of blank old dwellings in the distant town ;
But we must keep the vision fresh as morn,
We must not risk that it should ever lose
One of its features of staid loveliness,
One of its sweet associated thoughts,—
Therefore, whate'er befall, never return !
"Never return ! Time writes these little words
On palace and on hamlet ; strife is vain ;
First-love returns not,—friendship comes not back,
Glory revives not. Things are given us once,
And only once ; yet we may keep them ours,
If, like this day, we take them out of time,
And make them portions of the constant peace
Which is the shadow of eternity ! "

So ended the serene Philosopher ;
And to all minds the sad persuasive truth
Found an immediate access : the poor youth
Whose spirit was but now afire with hope,
Cast down his quenched enthusiastic eyes.
"Never return ! " in many various tones,
All grave, yet none wholly disconsolate,

Was echoed, amid parting signs of love,
As they went on their common homeward way.
Silent above, the multitudinous stars
Said, "We are steadfast,—we are not as Ye."
Silent the fields, up to the phantom hills,
Said, "We are dreaming of the vanished days
Which we shall see again, but Ye no more,"
So heavy pressed the meditative calm
On those full hearts, that all rejoiced to hear
The shrill cicala, clittering from below,
Call on the fireflies dancing through the vines.

II.—REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

WE have watched him to the last,
We have seen the dreaded king
Smile pacific, as he past
By that couch of suffering :
Wrinkles of aggressive years,
Channels of recondite tears,
Furrows on the anxious brow,
All are smooth as childhood's now.
Death, as seen by men in dreams,
Something stern and cruel seems,
But his face is not the same,
When he comes into the room,
Takes the hand, and names the name,
Scals the eyes with tender gloom,
Saying, "Blessed are the laws
To which all God's creature's bend :
Mortal! fear me not, because
Thine inevitable friend!"

So when all the limbs were still,
Moved no more by sense or will,
Rev'rent hands the body laid

In the Church's pitying shade,
With the pious rites that fall,
Like the rain-drops, upon all.
What could man refuse or grant
The spiritual inhabitant,
Who so long had ruled within
With power to sin or not to sin ?
Nothing. Hope, and hope alone,
Mates with death. Upon a stone
Let the simple name be writ,
Traced upon the infant's front
Years ago ; and under it,
As with Christian folk is wont,
"Requiescat " or, may be,
Symbol letters, R. I. P.

Rest is happy—rest is right,
Rest is precious in God's sight.
But if he, who lies below,
Out of an abundant heart
Drawing remedies for woe,
Never wearied to impart
Blessings to his fellow-men
If he never rested then,
But each harvest gathered seed
For the future word and deed,—
And the darkness of his kind
Filled him with such endless ruth,
That the very light of truth
Pained him walking 'mid the blind,—
How, when some transcendent change
Gives his being endless range,—
When he knows not time or space,
In the nearness of God's face,—

In the world of spirits how
Shall that soul be resting now ?
While one creature is unblest,
How can such as he have rest ?

“Rest in Peace,” the legend runs,
Rest is sweet to Adam’s sons.
But can he whose busy brain
Worked within this hollow skull,
Now his zeal for truth restrain,
Now his subtle fancy dull,
When he wanders spirit-free
In his young immortality !
While on earth he only bore
Life, as it was linked with lore,
And the infinite increase
Of knowledge was his only peace ;
Till that knowledge be possest,
How can such a mind have rest ?

Rest is happy, rest is meet
For well-worn and weary feet,
Surely not for him, on whom
Ponderous stands the pompous tomb,
Prompt to blind the Future’s eyes
With guilt deceit, and blazoned lies :
Him, who never used his powers
To speed for good the waiting hours,
Made none wiser for his seeing,
Made none better for his being ;
Closed his eyes, lest others’ woes
Should disturb his base repose ;
Catching at each selfish zest ;
How can he have right to rest ?

Rather we would deem him driven
Anywhere in search of heaven,
Failing ever in the quest,
Till he learns it is not given
That man should by himself be blest.

Here we struggle with the light,
And when comes the fated night,
Into Nature's lap we fall,
Like tired children, one and all.
Day and Labour, Night and Rest,
Come together in our mind,
And we image forth the blest
To eternal calm resigned :
Yet it may be that th' abyss
Of the lost is only this,
That for them all things to come
Are inanimate and dumb,
And immortal life they steep
In dishonourable sleep :
While no power of pause is given
To the inheritors of Heaven ;
And the holiest still are those
Who are furthest from repose,
And yet onward, onward, press
To a loftier godliness ;
Still becoming, more than being,
Apprehending, more than seeing,
Feeling, as from orb to orb
In their awful course they run,
How their souls new light absorb
From the self-existing One,—
Demiurgos, throned above,
Mind of Mind, and Love of Love.

John Stuart Blackie.

1809.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE, the son of an Aberdeen banker, was born in Glasgow in July 1809. He was educated at Aberdeen and Edinburgh universities, and studied in 1829-30 at Göttingen, Berlin and at Rome. In 1834 he was called to the Edinburgh bar, but he quickly forsook law for literature. He published a metrical translation of Goethe's "Faust" in 1834, and contributed articles, mainly on German authors, to various magazines. He was appointed Professor of Humanity in Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1841. In 1850 he published a metrical translation of "Æschylus," which, if it fails, as every translation must fail, to reproduce the blended grandeur and fire of the original, is eminently readable, and contains much spirited and flowing verse. He obtained the Greek chair in Edinburgh University in 1852. He visited Greece in 1853, and on his return, ardently advocated the teaching of modern Greek. He became widely known as a thorough Greek and German scholar, a dashing controversialist, a spirited lyricist, and a vigorous and versatile prose writer. He published "Lays and Legends of Ancient Greece" in 1857, "Three Discourses on Beauty" in 1858, and "Lyrical Poems" in 1860. He took a leading part in the movement leading to the abolition of the Test Act, which debarred others

than members of the Church of Scotland from holding chairs in Scottish Universities. In political strife he has borne himself as a free-lance, but has been consistent in protesting against what he holds to be the pestilent Anglicising of Scottish customs and literature and speech. He has spoken out strongly against the dispeopling of the Highlands, and has fervidly advocated the cause of the Crofters during the agitations of recent years. His "Homer and the Iliad" appeared in 1866. The work includes a translation of the epic, critical essays, and philological notes. The translation is in ballad measure; like its forerunners and successors, it is only partly successful. No writer has succeeded, to all seeming no writer ever will succeed, in reproducing the combined stateliness and elastic ease of the Homeric hexameter. Professor Blackie's measures have not the dignity of the Greek, but the verse is always spirited and fluent, and again and again rings out with the true heroic accent. "*Musa Burschicosa*," a book of songs for students and university men, was published in 1869. In this little volume Professor Blackie appears at his "easy best"—as one of the most genial, sprightly and spontaneous of rhymesters. "*Lays of the Highlands and Islands*" appeared in 1872; "*Self-Culture*," and "*Horæ Hellenicæ*,"—essays on Greek philology and Greek antiquities—in 1874; "*The Wise Man of Greece*"—a series of imaginary dialogues—and "*Four Phases of Morals*" in 1877. During the years 1874-76 Professor Blackie figured as the spokesman of a movement which resulted in the sum of £12,000 being raised for the endowment of a Celtic Chair in Edinburgh University. He published "*The Natural History of Atheism*" in

1877; "Lay Sermons," in 1881; "Altavona," a series of Highland sketches in prose, in 1882; and "The Wisdom of Goethe" in 1883. He resigned his chair in 1882, but since then he has continued to write and speak as vigorously and volubly as he did in his prime. His work, "Essays on Subjects of Moral and Social Interest," appeared in 1890.

Professor Blackie has been one of the best known and the most popular men of his day in Scotland. He may have left no work which will prove of enduring interest, but on his countrymen, especially on the young men who have sat under him, he has exerted an influence at once healthy and enlivening. Of his prose works the best is probably "Self-Culture," a book in which the wisdom of age is happily blended with the buoyant spirit of youth. His most ambitious verses, his "Lays and Legends of Ancient Greece," have never gained the popularity accorded to his more careless strains. The book, however, contains one ballad, "Salamis," in which the glory and terror of battle are caught in stirring, ringing words, and "The Highlander's Lament," included in the first edition of the same volume, is an excellent example of verse which is at once pathetic and manly.

It is, however, to his short lyrics, his light, rollicking lays, that his popularity with his countrymen has been mainly due. *La rime n'est pas riche*, it may be said, and assuredly the author has been all too lax and copious a versifier. And it may be that his countless deliverances on religion, and science, and politics, and Scottish music, and manners—and who can say what besides?—have not invariably deepened the wisdom of nations. One

may wish that the writer had been less boisterously patriotic, less aggressively voluble, less inconsistently cocksure. One may wish that he had worked more in the spirit of an artist. But his hearty, bracing songs, so vigorous and unforced, so rich in jollity and sympathy with youth, so full of hearty love of the bens and braes and sea-lochs of the North, are unquestionably a possession which has enheartened and enlivened not a few. And of the works of how many cautious thinkers and laborious lyric artists can as much be said? After all there are moods in which rollicking, careless stanzas, merrily jingled, lusty in sentiment, and breathing of hill and sea, are more welcome than verses deeper in import and fastidiously chiselled, which fail, however, to exhilarate and arouse.

WALTER WHYTE.

MUSA BURSCHICOSA.

A BOOK OF SONGS.

1869.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

I.

DORA.

I CAN like a hundred women,
I can love a score,
Only one with heart's devotion
Worship and adore.
Mary, Jessie, Lucy, Nancy,
With a fine control
Hold my eye or stir my fancy ;
Dora fills my soul.

Dainty doves are doves of Venus,
(Plummy, soft delight),
But my dove (O wonder!), Dora,
Hath an eagle's might.
Doves are pretty, doves are stupid,
But who Dora loves
Finds Minerva masqued in Cupid,
Strength in downy doves.

Like the sun's face brightly dancing
On the shimmering sea,
But, like Ocean, deep is Dora,
Strong, and fair, and free.
Chirping like a gay Cicala
In a sunny bower,
But a Muse is that Cicala
Sings with thoughtful power.

Like a beck that bickers blithely
 Down the daisied lea,
 So her bright soul bursts and blossoms
 In spontaneous glee.
 Full of gamesome show is Dora ;
 But behind the scene
 Sits the lofty will of Dora,
 Thronèd like a queen.

Lovely marvel ; oak and lily
 From one root came forth,
 Twined in leafy grace together
 At my Dora's birth.
 Mellow Eve, and bright Aurora,
 Sober Night and Noon,
 Dwell, divinely blent, in Dora,
 To a jarless tune.

I can like a hundred women,
 I can love a score,
 Only one with heart's devotion
 Worship and adore.
 Mary, Jessie, Lucy, Nancy,
 With a fine control
 Hold my eye or stir my fancy
 Dora fills my soul.

II.

MY LOVES.

Hie—" Shall I wasting in despair ?"
 (suggested by Anæcreon's "εἰ φύλλα, κ.τ.λ.")

NAME the leaves on all the trees,
 Name the waves on all the seas,
 Name the notes of all the groves,
 Thus thou namest all my loves.

I do love the dark, the fair,
Golden ringlets, raven hair,
Eye that swims in sunny light,
Glance that shoots like lightning bright

I do love the stately dame
And the sportive girl the same ;
Every changeful phase between
Blooming cheek and brow serene.

I do love the young, the old,
Maiden modest, virgin bold,
Tiny beauties, and the tall ;
Earth has room enough for all.

Which is better, who can say,
Lucy grave, or Mary gay ?
She who half her charms conceals,
She who flashes while she feels ?

Why should I my love confine ?
Why should fair be mine or thine ?
If I praise a tulip, why
Should I pass the primrose by ?

Paris was a pedant fool
Meting beauty by the rule,
Pallas ? Juno ? Venus ?—he
Should have chosen all the three.

I am wise, life's every bliss
Thankful tasting ; and a kiss
Is a sweet thing, I declare,
From a dark maid or a fair !

LAYS OF THE HIGHLANDS.

1872.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

THE LAY OF THE BRAVE CAMERON.

AT Quatre Bras, when the fight ran high,
Stout Cameron stood with wakeful eye,
Eager to leap, as a mettlesome hound,
Into the fray with a plunge and a bound.
But Wellington, lord of the cool command,
Held the reins with a steady hand,
Saying, "Cameron, wait, you'll soon have enough,
Give the Frenchmen a taste of your stuff,
When the Cameron men are wanted."

Now hotter and hotter the battle grew,
With tramp, and rattle, and wild halloo,
And the Frenchmen poured, like a fiery flood,
Right on the ditch where Cameron stood.
Then Wellington flashed from his steadfast stance
On his captain brave a lightning glance,
Saying, "Cameron, now have at them, boy,
Take care of the road to Charleroi,
Where the Cameron men are wanted."

Brave Cameron shot like a shaft from a bow
Into the midst of the plunging foe,
And with him the lads whom he loved, like a torrent,
Sweeping the rocks in its foamy current ;
And he fell the first in the fervid fray,
Where a deathful shot had shove its way,
But his men pushed on where the work was rough
Giving the Frenchmen a taste of their stuff,
Where the Cameron men were wanted.

Brave Cameron then, from the battle's roar
His foster-brother stoutly bore,
His foster-brother with service true,
Back to the village of Waterloo.
And they laid him on the soft green sod,
And he breathed his spirit there to God,
But not till he heard the loud hurrah
Of victory billowed from Quatre Bras,
Where the Cameron men were wanted.

By the road to Ghent they buried him then,
This noble chief of the Cameron men,
And not an eye was tearless seen
That day beside the alley green :
Wellington wept—the iron man !
And from every eye in the Cameron clan
The big round drop in bitterness fell,
As with the pipes he loved so well
His funeral wail they chanted.

And now he sleeps (for they bore him home,
When the war was done, across the foam),
Beneath the shadow of Nevis Ben,
With his sires, the pride of the Cameron men.
Three thousand Highlandmen stood round,
As they laid him to rest in his native ground ;
The Cameron brave, whose eye never quail'd
Whose heart never sank, and whose hand never failed,
Where a Cameron man was wanted.

SONGS OF RELIGION AND LIFE.

1876.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

LAWS OF NATURE.

THE fool hath in his heart declared,—by laws
 Since time began,
Blind, and without intelligential cause,
 Or reasoned plan,
All things are ruled. I from this lore dissent,
 With sorrowful shame
That reasoning men such witless wit should vent
 In reason's name.
O Thou that o'er this lovely world hast spread
 Thy jocund light,
Weaving with flowers beneath, and stars o'erhead
 This tissue bright
Of living powers, clear Thou my sense, that I
 May ever find
In all the marshalled pomp of earth and sky
 The marshalling mind !
Laws are not powers ; nor can the well-timed courses
 Of earths and moons
Ring to the stroke of blind unthinking forces
 Their jarless tunes.
Wiser were they who in the flaming vault
 The circling sun
Beheld, and in his ray, with splendid fault,
 Worshipped the one

Eye of the universe that seeth all,
And shapeth sight
In man and moth through curious visual ball
With fine delight.
O blessed beam, on whose refreshful might
Profusely shed
Six times ten years, with ever young delight,
Mine eye hath fed,
Still let me love thee, and with wonder new,
By flood and field,
Worship the fair, and consecrate the true
By thee revealed!
And loving thee, beyond thee love that first
Father of Lights
From whom the ray vivific marvellous burst,
Might of all mights,
Whose thought is order, and whose will is law.
That man is wise
Who worships God wide-eyed, with cheerful awe
And chaste surprise.

MESSIS VITÆ.

1886.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

I.—THE LAY OF THE LITTLE LADY.

A BALLAD OF MULL.

IN a tiny bay,
Where ships lie sure and steady,
In a quiet way
Lives a tiny lady ;
In a tiny house
Dwells my little fairy,
Gentle as a mouse,
Blythe as a canary.

Travelling I have been
In distant and in nigh lands,
And wonders many seen
In Lowlands and in Highlands ;
But never since the days
When fairies were quite common,
Did human vision gaze
On such a dear, small woman !

On the deep sea's brim,
In beauty quite excelling,
White, and tight, and trim,
Stands my lady's dwelling.
Stainless is the door,
With shiny polish glowing ;
A little plot before,
With pinks and sweet peas growing.

And when in you go
To my fairy's dwelling
You will find a show
Of beauty past all telling ;
Wealth of pretty wares,
Curtains, pictures, laces,
Sofas, tables, chairs,
All in their proper places.

But above all fair,
Of which my song is telling,
Sits my lady there,
The mistress of the dwelling.
Dressed in serge light blue,
With trimming white and snowy ;
All so nice and new,
With nothing false and showy.

Dainty is her head,
Quite the classic oval,
Just the thing you read
In the last new novel,
But you never saw ;
For Nature still is chary,
To reach the perfect law,
She modelled in my fairy.

An eye whose glance doth roam
O'er the azure spaces,
But still is most at home
'Mid happy human faces.
Cheeks of healthy red
With native freshness glowing,
By the strong breeze spread
From purple moorland blowing.

And a look of warm
 Welcome to the stranger,
Whom the sudden storm
 Hath cast on her from danger ;
And a board well spread,
 Bountiful and bonnie,
With milk and barley bread,
 Bramble jam and honey.

And for wit and brains,
 Though not taught at college,
Her dainty head contains
 All sorts of curious knowledge.
Every nook she knows,
 Every burn she crosses,
Where the rarest grows
 Of fungus, ferns, and mosses.

And when flowers are few,
 And suns of heat are chary,
She has work to do
 Beseems a bright-eyed fairy ;
A telescope she keeps
 For lofty observation,
Through which she finely peeps
 At all the starry nation.

But she's more than wise,
 Better far than clever,
From whose heart arise
 Thoughts of kindness ever ;
As the sun's bright ray
 Every flower is kissing,
All that comes her way
 Takes from her a blessing.

•

Where a widow weeps,
 She with her is weeping ;
Where a sorrow sleeps,
 She doth watch it sleeping ;
Where the sky is bright,
 With one sole taint of sadness,
Let her heave in sight,
 And all is turned to gladness.
And now, if you should fear
 I'm painting out a story,
Ask, and you will hear
 The truth at Tobermory.
In beauty Mull excels
 All ocean-girdled islands,
And there this lady dwells,
 Sweet angel of the Highlands.

II.—THE EMIGRANT LASSIE.

AS I came wandering down Glen Spean,
 Where the braes are green and grassy,
With my light step I overtook
 A weary-footed lassie,
She had one bundle on her back,
 Another in her hand,
And she walked as one who was full loath
 To travel from the land.
Quoth I, " My bonnie lass ;"—for she
 Had hair of flowing gold,
And dark brown eyes, and dainty limbs,
 Right pleasant to behold—
" My bonnie lass, what aileth thee
 On this bright summer day,
To travel sad and shoeless thus
 Upon the stony way ?

"I'm fresh and strong, and stoutly shod,
And thou art burdened so ;
March lightly now, and let me bear
The bundles as we go."

"No, no !" she said ; "that may not be ;
What's mine is mine to bear ;
Of good, or ill, as God may will,
I take my portioned share."

"But you have two and I have none ;
One burden give to me ;
I'll take that bundle from thy back,
That heavier seems to be."

"No, no !" she said ; "*this*, if you will,
That holds—no hand but mine
May bear it's weight from dear Glen Spean,
'Cross the Atlantic brine !"

"Well, well ! but tell me what may be
Within that precious load
Which thou dost bear with such fine care
Along the dusty road ?

"Belike it is some present rare
From friend in parting hour ;
Perhaps as prudent maiden's wont,
Thou tak'st with thee thy dower."

She drooped her head, and with her hand
She gave a mournful wave :

"Oh, do not jest, dear sir !—it is
Turf from my mother's grave !"

I spoke no word : we sat and wept
By the road-side together ;
No purer dew on that bright day
Was dropt upon the heather.

Sir Samuel Ferguson.

1810—1886.

SAMUEL FERGUSON, the third son of John Ferguson, of Collon House, co. Antrim, was born at Belfast, on March 10th, 1810. He was educated at Belfast, and at Trinity College, Dublin; was called to the Irish bar in 1838; made Q.C. 1859, and appointed Deputy Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland 1867. In 1878 he received the honour of knighthood in recognition of his services in this office. Soon after his first arrival in Dublin he began contributing to the *Dublin University Magazine* English metrical versions of old Irish poems and ballads. He also published a series of tales in prose, entitled "Hibernian Nights' Entertainments," and dealing with early Irish history. These were re-issued posthumously, together with other reprints, by Lady Ferguson in 1887. Other poems appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, including "The Forging of the Anchor," perhaps his best known poem. In 1865 he published a volume of collected poems entitled "Lays of the Western Gael"; in 1872 "Congal," an epic poem in five books, and in 1880 a third volume of Poems. He wrote many essays on Irish antiquities, and other subjects; and carried on lengthy investigations in various parts of Ireland in search of Oghams. A volume dealing with the subject, entitled "Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland," was posthumously published in 1887.

In 1882 he was unanimously elected President of the Royal Irish Academy. He died August 9th, 1886, and was buried at Donegore, co. Antrim.

In the view of some Sir Samuel Ferguson is entitled to rank as Ireland's national bard, the epic "Congal" being relied on as the basis of the claim. Others, while denying his supremacy, concede to him the right to divide honours with James Clarence Mangan in this regard. If love and labour for the cause of Irish literature might count it would be difficult to disprove Sir Samuel's claim, though even here it is impossible to ignore the work of Aubrey de Vere.

"Congal" has many brilliant passages, of which the selections quoted in the following pages will serve as examples. It may be doubted, however, whether any form of rhymed verse can for a moment compare with decasyllabic blank verse for the purposes of an epic. It requires almost superhuman strength to maintain an even wing of elevation in sweeping measures and florid forms. "The Lays of the Western Gael" are full of interest as narratives of Irish history, or reproductions of Irish originals, though they lack the atmosphere which Aubrey de Vere seems sometimes able to revive. To us there is an open-air freshness about such poems as "The Bird and the Brook" and "The Little Maiden" ("Poems," 1880), which makes us wish that Sir Samuel Ferguson had given us more of himself, even at the expense of the national history he loved so well. "Willy Gilliland" is a spirited ballad, and "The Forging of the Anchor" a hearty ringing lay. The "Elegy on the Death of Thomas Davis" is a successful occasional poem.

ALFRED H. MILES.

CONGAL,

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

I.

OPENING LINES.

(FROM BOOK I.)

THE Hosting here of Congal Claen. 'Twas loud-lark-
carolling May
When Congal, as the lark elate, and radiant as the day,
Rode forth from steep Rath-Keltar gate : nor marvel that
the King
Should share the solace of the skies, and gladness of the
spring,
For from her high sun-harbouring bower the fortress gate
above
The loveliest lady of the North looked down on him with
love.
"Adieu, sweet heart ; a short adieu ; in seven days hence,"
he cried,
"Expect me at your portals back to claim my promised bride.
My heart at last has full content : my love's acceptance heals
All wounds of Fortune : what although Malodhar Macha
steals,
By Domnal's false arbitrament, my tributes and my land,
Nor he nor sovereign Domnal's self can steal Lafinda's hand.
Then forward, youths, for Dunangay ; this royal banquet
sped
That binds our truce, remains no more but straightway back,
and wed."
On went the royal cavalcade, a goodly sight to see,
As westward, o'er the Land of Light, they swept the
flowery lea ;

Each shining hoof of every steed upcasting high behind
The gay green turf in thymy tufts that scented all the wind,
While crossing at the coursers' heads with intersecting
 bounds,
As swift as skimming swallows played the joyous, barking
 hounds,

II.

THE WASHER OF THE FORD.

(FROM BOOK III.)

And now, at dawn, to cross the fords, hard by the royal
 town,
The fresh, well-ordered, vigorous bands in gallant ranks
 drew down :
When lo, a Spectre horrible, of more than human size,
Full in the middle of the ford took all their wondering eyes.
A ghastly woman it appeared, with grey dishevelled hair,
Blood-draggled, and with sharp-boned arms, and fingers
 crook'd and spare
Dabbling and washing in the ford, where mid-leg deep she
 stood
Beside a heap of heads and limbs that swam in oozing
 blood,
Whereon, and on a glittering heap of raiment rich and brave
With swift, pernicious hands she scooped and pour'd the
 crimson'd wave.
And though the stream approaching her ran tranquil, clear
 and bright,
Sand-gleaming between verdant banks, a fair and peaceful
 sight,
Downward the blood-polluted flood rode turbid, strong and
 proud,
With heady-eddying dangerous whirls and surges dashing
 loud.

All stood aghast. But Kellach cried, "Advance me to the
bank;
I'll speak the Hag." But back, instead, his trembling bearers
shrank,
Then Congal from the foremost rank a spear-cast forward
strode,
And said, "Who art thou, hideous one; and from what
curs't abode
Comest thou thus in open day the hearts of men to freeze;
And whose lopp'd heads and severed limbs and bloody vests
are these?"

"I am the Washer of the Ford," she answered; "and my
race
Is of the Tuath de Danaan line of Magi; and my place
For toil is in the running streams of Erin; and my cave
For sleep is in the middle of the shell-heaped Cairn of Maev,
High up on haunted Knocknarea; and this fine carnage-
heap
Before me, and these silken vests and mantles which I
steep
Thus in the running water, are the severed heads and
hands
And spear-torn scarfs and tunics of these gay-dressed,
gallant bands
Whom thou, O Congal, ledest to death. And this," the
Fury said,
Uplifting by the clotted locks what seemed a dead man's
head,
"Is thine own head, O Congal." Therewith she rose in air,
And vanished from the warriors' view, leaving the river
bare
Of all but running water. But Congal drew his sword,
And with a loud defying shout, plunged madly in the ford.

III.

THE VISION OF CONGAL.

(FROM BOOK V.)

Even as he spoke, soft-rustling sounds to all their ears
were borne,

Such as warm winds at eve excite 'mongst brown-ripe
rolling corn.

All, but Lafinda, looked ; but she, behind a steadfast lid,
Kept her calm eyes from that she deemed a sight unholy,
hid.

And Congal reck'd not if the Shape that passed before his
eyes

Lived only on the inward film, or outward 'neath the skies.

No longer soiled with stain of earth, what seemed his
mantle shone

Rich with innumerable hues refulgent, such as one
Beholds, and thankful-hearted he, who casts abroad his gaze
O'er some rich tillage-country-side, when mellow Autumn
days

Gild all the sheafy, foodful stooks ; and, broad before him
spread,—

He looking landward from the brow of some great sea-scape's
head,

Bray or Ben-Edar—sees beneath, in silent pageant grand,
Slow fields of sunshine spread o'er fields of rich, corn-
bearing land ;

Red glebe and meadow-margin green commingling to the view
With yellow stubble, browning woods, and upland tracts of
blue ;—

Then, sated with the pomp of fields, turns, seaward, to the
verge

Where, mingling with the murmuring wash made by the
far-down surge,

Comes up the clangorous song of birds unseen, that, low
beneath,
Poised off the rock, ply under foot ; and, 'mid the blossom-
ing heath,
And mint-sweet herb that loves the ledge rare-air'd, at ease
reclined,
Surveys the wide pale-heaving floor crisped by a curling
wind ;
With all its shifting, shadowy belts, and chasing scopes of
green,
Sun-strown, foam-freckled, sail-embossed, and blackening
squalls between,
And slant, cerulean-skirted showers, that with a drowsy
sound,
Heard inward, of ebullient waves, stalk all the horizon round ;
And—haply, being a citizen just 'scaped from some disease
That long has held him sick indoors, now, in the brine-fresh
breeze,
Health-salted, bathes ; and says, the while he breathes
reviving bliss,
“I am not good enough, oh God, nor pure enough for this !”—
Such seemed its hues. His feet were set in fields of waving
grain ;
His head, above, obscured the sun ; all round the leafy plain
Blackbird and thrush piped loud acclaims : in middle air,
breast high,
The lark shrill carolled : over head, and half-way up the sky,
Sailed the far eagle : from his knees, down dale and grassy
steep,
Thronged the dun, mighty upland droves, and mountain-
mottling sheep,
And by the river-margins green, and o'er the thymy meads
Before his feet, careered, at large, the slim-knee'd, slender
steeds.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

I.—THE FORGING OF THE ANCHOR.

COME, see the Dolphin's anchor forged— 'tis at a
white heat now ;
The bellows ceased, the flames decreased—though on
the forge's brow,
The little flames still fitfully play through the sable
mound,
And fitfully you still may see the grim smiths rank-
ing round,
All clad in leathern panoply, their broad hands only
bare ;
Some rest upon their sledges here, some work the
windlass there.

The windlass strains the tackle chains, the black
mound heaves below,
And red and deep a hundred veins burst out at
every throe :
It rises, roars, rends all outright—O, Vulcan, what a
glow !
'Tis blinding white, 'tis blasting bright—the high
sun shines not so ;
The high sun sees not, on the earth, such fiery fear-
ful show ;
The roof-ribs swarth, the candent hearth, the ruddy
lurid row

Of smiths that stand, an ardent band, like men before
the foe :

As, quivering through his fleece of flame, the sailing
monster, slow

Sinks on the anvil--all about the faces fiery
grow ;

"Hurrah !" they shout, "leap out--leap out ;" bang
bang the sledges go ;

Hurrah ! the jetted lightnings are hissing high and
low—

A hailing fount of fire is struck at every squashing
blow,

The leathern mail rebounds the hail, the rattling
cinders strow

The ground around : at every bound the sweltering
fountains flow,

And thick and loud the swinking crowd at every
stroke pant, "Ho !"

Leap out, leap out, my masters ; leap out, and lay on
load !

Let's forge a goodly anchor—a bower thick and
broad ;

For a heart of oak is hanging on every blow, I
bode,

And I see the good ship riding, all in a perilous road—
The low reef roaring on her lee—the roll of ocean
pour'd

From stem to stern, sea after sea ; the mainmast by
the board ;

The bulwarks down, the rudder gone, the boats stove
at the chains !

But courage still, brave mariners—the bower yet
remains,

And not an inch to flinch he deigns, save when ye
pitch sky high ;

Then moves his head, as though he said, "Fear
nothing—here am I."

Swing in your strokes in order, let foot and hand
keep time ;

Your blows make music sweeter far than any steeple's
chime :

But while you sling your sledges, sing—and let the
burthen be,

The anchor is the anvil-king, and royal craftsmen we !
Strike in, strike in—the sparks begin to dull their
rustling red :

Our hammers ring with sharper din, our work will
soon be sped.

Our anchor soon must change his bed of fiery rich array,
For a hammock at the roaring bows, or an oozy
couch of clay ;

Our anchor soon must change the lay of merry crafts-
men here,

For the yeo-heave-o' and the heave-away, and the
sighing seaman's cheer ;

When, weighing slow, at eve they go—far, far from
love and home ;

And sobbing sweethearts, in a row, wail o'er the
ocean foam.

In livid and obdurate gloom he darkens down at last ;
A shapely one he is, and strong, as e'er from cat was
cast.

O trusted and trustworthy guard, if thou hadst life
like me,

What pleasures would thy toils reward, beneath the
deep green sea !

O deep Sea-diver, who might then behold such sights
as thou ?
The hoary monster's palaces ! methinks what joy
'twere now
To go plumb plunging down amid the assembly of
the whales,
And feel the churn'd sea round me boil beneath their
scourging tails !
Then deep in tangle-woods to fight the fierce sea-
unicorn,
And send him foiled and bellowing back, for all his
ivory horn ;
To leave the subtle sworder-fish of bony blade forlorn ;
And for the ghastly-grinning shark to laugh his jaws
to scorn ;
To leap down on the kraken's back, where 'mid Nor-
wegian isles,
He lies, a lubber anchorage for sudden shallow'd
miles ;
Till snorting, like an under-sea volcano, off he rolls ;
Meanwhile to swing, a-buffeting the far astonished
shoals
Of his back-browsing ocean-calves ; or, haply in a
cove,
Shell-strown, and consecrate of old to some Undiné's
love,
To find the long-hair'd mermaidens ; or, hard by icy
lands,
To wrestle with the Sea-serpent, upon cerulean sands.

O broad-armed Fisher of the deep, whose sports can
equal thine ?
The Dolphin weighs a thousand tons, that tugs thy
cable line !

And night by night, 'tis thy delight, thy glory day by day,
Through sable sea and breaker white, the giant game to play—
But shamer of our little sports ! forgive the name I gave—
A fisher's joy is to destroy—thine office is to save.
O lodger in the sea-kings' halls, couldst thou but understand
Whose be the white bones by thy side, or who that dripping band,
Slow swaying in the heaving wave, that round about thee bend,
With sounds like breakers in a dream blessing their ancient friend ?
Oh, couldst thou know what heroes glide with larger steps round thee,
Thine iron side would swell with pride ; thou'dst leap within the sea !

Give honour to their memories who left the pleasant strand,
To shed their blood so freely for the love of Fatherland—
Who left their chance of quiet age and grassy church-yard grave,
So freely, for a restless bed amid the tossing wave—
Oh, though our anchor may not be all I have fondly sung,
Honour him for their memory, whose bones he goes among !

II.—BIRD AND BROOK.

BIRD that pipest on the bough,
Would that I could sing as thou ;
Runnel gurgling on beneath,
Would I owned thy liquid breath ;
I would make a lovely lay
Worthy of the pure-bright day.

Worthy of the freshness spread
Round my path and o'er my head ;
Of the unseen airs that rise
Incensing the morning skies
As from opening buds they spring
In the dew's evanishing.

Brighter yet, and even more clear
Than that blue encasing sphere,
Worthy of the gentle eyes
Opening on this paradise,
With their inner heavens as deep,
Fresh from youth's enchanted sleep.

Worthy of the voices sweet
That my daily risings greet,
And, to even song addressed,
Ere we lay us down to rest,
Lift my spirit's laggard weight
Half-way to the heavenly gate.

I would make it with a dance
Of the rhythmic utterance,
With a gambit and retreat
Of the counter-trilling feet
And a frolic of the tone
To the song-bird only known.

With a soft transfusing fall
Would I make my madrigal,
Full as rills that, as they pass,
Shake the springing spikes of grass,
And that ample under-speech
Only running waters reach.

I would sing it loud and well,
Till the spirits of Amabel,
And of Ethel, from their nests,
Caught with new delicious zests
Of the soul's life out-of-door,
Forth should peep, and crave for more.

But, because I own not these,
Oh, ye mountains and ye trees,
Oh, ye tracts of heavenly air,
Voices sweet, and sweet eyes fair
Of my darlings, ye must rest
In my rhyme but half-expressed.

Yea, and if I had them all,
Voice of bird and brook at call,
And could speak as winds in woods
Or with tumult of the floods,
Yet a theme there would remain
I should still essay in vain.

For my soul would strive to raise,
If it might, a song of praise,
All unworthy though it were,
To the Maker of the air,
To the Giver of the life
Breathing round me joyous-rife.

Giver of that general joy
Brightening face of girl and boy,
Sender of those soul-reliefs
Hidden in our boons of griefs,
Lest with surfeit and excess
We surcharge life's blessedness.

Such a lay to frame aright,
Waft me to some mountain-height,
Far from man's resort, and bring,
From the world's environing,
All that lives of sweet and strong
To the dressing of the song.

I would clothe its mighty words
With the lowings of the herds
Loosed to pasture; with the shout
Of the monsoon bursting out
Past the Himalayan flanks
O'er the empty Indian tanks.

With a noise of many waves
Would I fill the sounding staves ;
Yea, the great sea-monsters make
Of my rapture to partake,
Till their gambollings they'd lend
To the hymn's triumphant end.

But, oh God, at thought of Thee
And of Thine immensity,
All my fancy's gathered powers
Droop and faint as summer flowers
By the high meridian sun
In his glory glanced upon.

And, behold, this earth we tread,
Though the thin film o'er it spread,
Called by men the atmosphere,
Thrill with life's vibrations clear,
Yet achieves its ordered round
Through the heavens, without a sound.

And the worlds that further are
Hold not converse, star with star ;
And the comets speeding hither
Through the parted deeps of ether,
Teach through all their lives of law,
Silence in the speech of awe.

So, in awe and wonder mute,
Let the throstle's warbling flute
And the stream's melodious babble
Hint the thoughts unutterable,
Till Himself do touch the wire
Of another David's lyre.

III.—THE LITTLE MAIDEN.

1878.

LITTLE maiden, in the rain,
On the mountain road,
Never bloom of healthier grain
On a wet cheek glowed ;
Never active little feet
Hastened footsteps more discreet.
Plain it is it was not play
Brought thee out of doors,
This tempestuous autumn day,
O'er the windy moors :
Something thou hast had to do,
Deemed of trust and moment too.

Now, the errand duly done,
Home thou hiest fast,
Through the flying gleams of sun,
Through the laden blast,
With the light of purpose high
Kindling bravely in thine eye.

Oh, 'twas fearful at the top,
While it rained and blew ;—
Till the dark cloud lifted up
And the sun beamed through,
Showing all the country's side
Spread beneath thee, grand and wide.

Wond'rous wide the world extends !
Thought'st thou, as thy glance
Travelled to the welkin's ends
O'er the bright expanse,
Stubble fields and browning trees,
Spires, and foreign parishes !

Other children's homes are there
Sheltered from the storm ;
Others' mothers' arms prepare
Clasping welcomes warm ;
Others' fathers' fields are made
Fertile by the plough and spade :

Men and horses on the land,
Maidens in the byre ;
Boys and girls, a merry band,
Round the evening fire :—
Such the world, for thee, and, lo,
There it lay in glorious show.

Round thee, in the glittering rays
By the rain-drops shed,
Shone the blossom'd furze a-blaze,
Shone the fern-brake red ;
Rough but lovely, as thy own
Life's ideal, little one !

Then a glowing thought there came,
Guess I not aright ?—
That the furze's yellow flame
Could not shine so bright
Nor the fern-leaves spread so fair
If the good God were not there.

Rightly to that thought I trace
All the courage high
Flushing through thy wetted face,
Mounting in thine eye,
Now the cloud and driving rain
Close around thy path again.

Could these purblind eyes of mine,
Past the curtain, see
Things unseen and things divine,
Sure it seems to me
I would see an Angel glide
Down the mountain by thy side.

Sir Francis Hastings Doyle.

1810—1888.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE was born August 2nd, 1810, at Nunappleton, near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire. When between ten and eleven he was sent to the school of Monsieur Clement, at Chelsea, where he had for companions Codrington, afterwards admiral of the Fleet, the three Romillys, and Mr. Locke King. He went to Eton in 1823, and there he had for contemporaries Mr. Gladstone, Sir T. D. Acland, and others who have become famous. In his "Reminiscences," published in 1886, he has much to tell of his schools, and schoolfellows. He tells us that he often heard Mr. Gladstone speak in the Debating Society—heard, indeed, his maiden speech which characteristically began with the words: "Sir, in this age of increased and increasing civilisation." Arthur Henry Hallam and Milnes Gaskell were also there, and Bruce, afterwards Lord Elgin. He has many recollections of his holidays spent in Yorkshire, and says that he owed much to them. He went up to Christ Church, Oxford, in 1829—where Mr. Gladstone stood a year in advance of him—a thing he deeply regretted, as their books were different, lectures different, and their common topics of interest thus narrowed. He obtained a first-class in classics in 1831, and shortly afterwards was called to the Bar. In 1845 he was

appointed Receiver-General of Customs, and became a Commissioner of Customs in 1870. But the duties of the office did not so absorb his energies that he was unable to indulge his taste for literature and to produce poetry. He candidly acknowledges that the publication of the volume, entitled, "The Return of the Guards, and other Poems," in 1866, was prompted by his desire to fill the chair of poetry at Oxford on Mr. Matthew Arnold's retirement from it. "In prospect of that vacancy," he says, "an old ambition of mine has renewed itself within me." He was successful, and became Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1867, and was re-elected in 1872; but on the expiration of his second period of five years' occupation of the chair, he retired. Together with his professorship he held a fellowship of All Souls' College. He published a series of his lectures delivered from the chair of poetry; but his prose has never commanded anything like the attention that some of his verse has done. His insight, however, in certain respects was very true, and some of his criticisms were suggestive, though it may well be that they appeared, alike to those who heard them, and those who afterwards read them, to fail in distinction, and final felicity of style, seeing that he followed such a master as Matthew Arnold. He died on the 8th of June, 1888.

Sir Francis Doyle's importance in the history of English poetry is not to be measured by the amount he has produced. That was comparatively slight. But he showed special individuality in one department, he exhibited a new spirit in the framing of the ballad; he showed that in the events of contemporary history subjects arose that were as

susceptible as any in the far past of free ballad treatment, with all the old freshness, directness and simplicity. His great merit lies, and will lie, in this. He wrote much in the form of sonnets—more particularly in later years—only a few of which have been reprinted; some stirring songs, and also some classical and descriptive pieces, but he will hold his place in English poetry because he has set the seal of imagination on exceptional acts of heroism and bravery (of which history hardly takes note), and thus has in the most vivid way supplemented the national annals, so that when we read of this engagement, or of that war, we cannot help thinking of the ballad in which Sir Francis Doyle threw a streak of light, and it may be of pathetic but gladdening relief athwart the smoky din and tumult—the horrors and pains with which war is so closely associated. He is patriotic in the deepest and the truest sense; he can celebrate not only the heroism of Englishmen, but the better qualities of their enemies, that so he may heighten the proud glory they have won in many desperate plights and forlorn hopes. The rough and ready metres that were used aforetime to commemorate the deeds of the past, he skilfully varied and made effective for contemporary incidents.

Sir Francis Doyle's first volume was published in 1840. It is in many parts immature and youthful: it contains only a few pieces, which give full promise of what he was to achieve, and among them "The Old Cavalier," "The Eagle's Nest," "Mehrab Khan," "The Mameluke Charge," "The Crusader's Return," and "The Catholic." There was also a piece of a lighter kind which was marked by easy flowing

metres, and a familiar style which has an interest of its own. It is titled the "Poetaster's Plea," and is an epistle addressed to Mr. Gladstone. The volume was eked out with classical reproductions, and songs and ballads of a more or less conventional type. The poems that we have named include almost all the poems which he deemed worthy of reprinting in the volume of 1866, to which we have already referred. In 1849 he had published a Translation of the *Ædipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles—in every way creditable to his scholarship. One of the new poems in the volume of 1866 was "Gythia"—a tale of the lower Roman empire, and it is every way, to our mind, a graceful, thoughtful, finished poem. The last two stanzas will give a good idea of its gravity, elevation, and style, and we therefore quote them:—

" But time is strong on this wild globe of ours,
And immortalities, which seem designed
To bloom for ever, fade, like summer flowers ;
Beneath the autumn rain and winter wind,
That column with its statue sunk to dust ;
The people that upreared them ceased to be ;
Nations and tribes and languages were thrust
Each over each, as by some sweeping sea ;
Till battles of our own rocked to and fro
O'er the forgotten brave, who sleep below.

" Moreover, that fresh glory, though we think
That, like the unwearied sun, its light shall last,
At God's good pleasure must unheeded sink
Into a moonless and a starless past ;
For an hour cometh when the gulf between
Gythia and Inkerman seems but a day ;
All will have changed upon this busy scene,
And Britain's self, like Gythia, passed away.
So that for us, and her, rare students look
In some dull chronicler's unfingered book."

Of his efforts in a philosophic vein, "The Platonist" (p. 261) may be cited, as also may the "Epicurean," which we venture to quote here.

"How gently, beautiful and calm,
The quiet river murmurs by;
How soft the light, how full of balm
The breeze that soothes the dark'ning sky!

"In every clime, in every state,
We may be happy if we will;
Man wrestles against iron fate,
And then complains of pain and ill.

"The flowers, the beasts, the very heaven,
Calmly their destined paths pursue;
All take the pleasures that are given,
We only find them short and few.

"Oh that mankind, alive to truth,
Would cease a hopeless war to wage;
Would reap in youth the joys of youth,—
In age the peacefulness of age!

"Upon an everlasting tide
Into the silent seas we go;
But verdure laughs along the side,
And roses on the margin blow.

"Nor life, nor death, nor aught they hold,
Rate thou above their natural height;
Yet learn that all our eyes behold,
Has value, if we mete it right.

"Pluck then the flowers that line the stream,
Instead of fighting with its power;
But pluck as flowers, not gems, nor deem
That they will bloom beyond their hour.

"Whate'er betides, from day to day,
An even pulse and spirit keep;
And like a child, worn out with play,
When wearied with existence, sleep."

Two of his poems, published after the date of his last volume, deserve notice: "The Battle of Famars" (celebrating the heroic deed of his grandfather, Welbore Ellis Doyle, who rallied his regiment—fourteenth of the line, and, under a heavy fire, took the fortified Camp of Famars). This had appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, and he reprinted it near the end of the "Reminiscences." And, second, a tribute to the memory of General Gordon, with which that volume closes. Both are in his finest ballad vein. Here are a few stanzas from the latter—altogether worthy of the subject:—

" In Eastern skies the Dawn grows red,
But yet yon Heaven itself must know,
That those young morning beams are shed,
Upon a poorer world below ;
He who for England, helped by none,
So long his crushing burdens bore,
As grand and lonely as the sun,
Set yesterday to rise no more.

* * * * *

Oh Mother England ! faint not yet,
But teach us how to strive like him ;
There burns a hope before us set,
A Beacon never waning dim.
If we, through Gordon's strength grow strong,
And nurse within us, living still
That it may lead our steps along,
A Presence from his heart and will ;
We shall press forward to our goal,
Sustained by echoes from the Past,
Sustained by Him—whose Death-notes toll
Sublime as any, though the last ;
Yes ; we must follow on his track,
Like those, who coming from afar,
To Bethlehem, never looking back,
Followed in faith that sudden star."

ALEX. H. JAPP.

POEMS.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

I.—MEHRAB KHAN.

“Mehrab Khan died, as he said he would, sword in hand,
at the door of his own Zenana.”—*Capture of Kelat.*

WITH all his fearless chiefs around
The Moslem leader stood forlorn,
And heard at intervals, the sound
Of drums athwart the desert borne,
To him a sign of fate, they told
That Britain in her wrath was nigh,
And his great heart its powers unrolled
In steadiness of will to die.

“Ye come, in your mechanic force,
A soulless mass of strength and skill—
Ye come, resistless in your course,
What matters it?—’Tis but to kill.
A serpent in the bath, a gust
Of venom’d breezes through the door,
Have power to give us back to dust—
Has all your grasping empire more?

“Your thousand ships upon the sea,
Your guns and bristling squares by land,
Are means of death—and so may be
A dagger in a damsel’s hand.
Put forth the might you boast, and try
If it can shake my seated will;
By knowing when and how to die,
I can escape, and scorn you still.

“The noble heart, as from a tower,
Looks down on life that wears a stain
He lives too long who lives an hour
Beneath the clanking of a chain.
I breathe my spirit on my sword,
I leave a name to honour known,
And perish, to the last the lord
Of all that man can call his own.”

Such was the mountain leader's speech ;
Say ye, who tell the bloody tale,
When havoc smote the howling breach,
Then did the noble savage quail ?
No—when through dust, and steel, and flame,
Hot streams of blood, and smothering smoke,
True as an arrow to its aim,
The meteor-flag of England broke ;

And volley after volley threw
A storm of ruin, crushing all,
Still cheering on a faithful few,
He would not yield his father's hall.
At his yet unpolluted door
He stood, a lion-hearted man,
And died, A FREEMAN STILL, before
The merchant thieves of Frangistan.

II.—THE RED THREAD OF HONOUR.

TOLD TO THE AUTHOR BY THE LATE SIR CHARLES JAMES
NAPIER.

ELEVEN men of England
A breast-work charged in vain ;
Eleven men of England
Lie stripped, and gashed, and slain.

Slain ; but of foes that guarded
Their rock-built fortress well,
Some twenty had been mastered,
When the last soldier fell.

Whilst Napier piloted his wondrous way
Across the sand-waves of the desert sea,
Then flashed at once, on each fierce clan, dismay,
Lord of their wild Truckee.
These missed the glen to which their steps were bent,
Mistook a mandate, from afar half heard,
And, in that glorious error, calmly went
To death without a word.

The robber-chief mused deeply,
Above those daring dead ;
“Bring here,” at length he shouted,
“Bring quick, the battle thread.
Let Eblis blast for ever
Their souls, if Allah will :
But we must keep unbroken
The old rules of the Hill.

“Before the Ghiznee tiger
Leapt forth to burn and slay ;
Before the holy Prophet
Taught our grim tribes to pray ;
Before Secunder’s lances
Pierced through each Indian glen ;
The mountain laws of honour
Were framed for fearless men.

“Still when a chief dies bravely,
We bind with green one wrist—
Green for the brave, for heroes
One crimson thread we twist.

Say ye, oh gallant Hillmen,
For these, whose life has fled,
Which is the fitting colour,
The green one, or the red ? ”

“ Our brethren, laid in honoured graves, may wear
Their green reward,” each noble savage said ;
“ To these, whom hawks and hungry wolves shall tear,
Who dares deny the red ? ”

Thus conquering hate, and steadfast to the right,
Fresh from the heart that haughty verdict came ;
Beneath a waning moon, each spectral height,
Rolled back its loud acclaim.

Once more the chief gazed keenly
Down on those daring dead ;
From his good sword their hearts’ blood
Crept to that crimson thread.
Once more he cried, “ The judgment,
Good friends, is wise and true,
But though the red be given,
Have we not more to do ? ”

“ These were not stirred by anger,
Nor yet by lust made bold ;
Renown they thought above them,
Nor did they look for gold.
To them their leader’s signal
Was as the voice of God :
Unmoved, and uncomplaining,
The path it showed they trod.

“ As, without sound or struggle,
The stars unhurrying march,
Where Allah’s finger guides them,
Through yonder purple arch,

These Franks, sublimely silent,
Without a quickened breath,
Went, in the strength of duty,
Straight to their goal of death.

"If I were now to ask you,
To name our bravest man,
Ye all at once would answer,
They called him Mehrab Khan.
He sleeps among his fathers,
Dear to our native land,
With the bright mark he bled for
Firm round his faithful hand.

"The songs they sing of Roostrum
Fill all the past with light ;
If truth be in their music,
He was a noble knight.
But were those heroes living,
And strong for battle still,
Would Mehrab Khan or Roostrum
Have climbed, like these, the Hill ?"

And they replied, "Though Mehrab Khan was brave
As chief, he chose himself what risks to run ;
Prince Roostrum lied, his forfeit life to save,
Which these had never done."

"Enough !" he shouted fiercely ;
"Doomed though they be to hell,
Bind fast the crimson trophy
Round *both* wrists—bind it well.
Who knows but that great Allah
May grudge such matchless men,
With none so decked in heaven,
To the fiends' flaming den ?"

Then all those gallant robbers
Shouted a stern "Amen!"
They raised the slaughtered sergent,
They raised his mangled ten.
And when we found their bodies
Left bleaching in the wind,
Around *both* wrists in glory
That crimson thread was twined.

Then Napier's knightly heart, touched to the core,
Rung like an echo, to that knightly deed;
He bade its memory live for evermore,
That those who run may read.

III.—THE MAMELUKE CHARGE.

LET the Arab courser go
Headlong on the silent foe;
Their plumes may shine like mountain snow,
Like fire their iron tubes may glow,
Their cannon death on death may throw,
Their pomp, their pride, their strength, we know,
But—let the Arab courser go.

The Arab horse is free and bold,
His blood is noble from of old,
Through dams, and sires, many a one,
Up to the steed of Solomon.
He needs no spur to rouse his ire,
His limbs of beauty never tire,
Then, give the Arab horse the rein,
And their dark squares will close in vain.
Though loud the death-shot peal, and louder,
He will only neigh the prouder;

Though nigh the death-flash glare, and nigher,
He will face the storm of fire ;
He will leap the mound of slain,
Only let him have the rein.

The Arab horse will not shrink back,
Though death confront him in his track,
The Arab horse will not shrink back,
And shall his rider's arm be slack ?
No !—By the God who gave us life,
Our souls are ready for the strife.

We need no serried lines, to show
A gallant bearing to the foe.
We need no trumpet to awake
The thirst, which blood alone can slake.
What is it that can stop our course,
Free riders of the Arab horse ?

Go—brave the desert wind of fire ;
Go—beard the lightning's look of ire ;
Drive back the ravening flames, which leap
In thunder from the mountain steep ;
But dream not, men of fifes and drums,
To stop the Arab when he comes :
Not tides of fire, not walls of rock,
Could shield you from that earthquake shock.

Come, brethren, come, too long we stay,
The shades of night have rolled away,
Too fast the golden moments fleet,
Charge, ere another pulse has beat ;
Charge—like the tiger on the fawn—
Before another breath is drawn.

IV.—THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS.

“Some Sikhs, and a private of the Buffs having remained behind with the grog-carts, fell into the hands of the Chinese. On the next morning they were brought before the authorities, and commanded to perform the *kotou*. The Sikhs obeyed; but Moyse, the English soldier, declaring that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive, was immediately knocked upon the head, and his body thrown on a dunghill.”—*See China Correspondent of the “Times.”*

LAST night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;

A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.

To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,

He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,

A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.

Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame:

He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seem'd,
Like dreams, to come and go;

Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd,
One sheet of living snow;

The smoke, above his father's door,
In grey soft eddyings hung:

Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doom'd by himself, so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by.
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unflinching on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

V.—THE PLATONIST.

FATHER of Gods and men, on thee we call,
Thou, who within the limits of thy soul,
Embracing all things, yet distinct from all,
Spread'st life and order through the boundless whole.

It is the highest privilege of man,
The crown, which philosophic virtue brings,
After long years of thought, aright to scan
Thy presence, hidden under human things.

Not easy is the task—nor is it wise,
At large the holy secret to unfold;
Excessive light, into dim-seeing eyes,
Infuses darkness blinder than of old.

How noble are the Gods—that spring from thee,
The holy ones who made and bless us all—
Rivers of goodness, issuing from thy sea
Of love, into whose deeps again they fall.

And we too are thy children, for within
Our dim and crowded hearts, under the strife
Of fleshly lusts, of passion, and of sin,
Burns on one spark of everlasting life.

A spark of heaven is given us, to keep clear
Of this foul dungeon's damp, that we may see,
A seed of heaven is set, for us to rear,
Into a beautiful and deathless tree.

For this the toilsome circle was ordained,
Lives new and multiform, unending still—
Until the soul its native seats has gained,
Or sunk for ever to the gulfs of ill.

Turn not the spirit into flesh, nor grieve
For virtue's sake to suffer and to die—
So, after fewer transits, shalt thou leave
Gross darkness, for a shining light on high.

Alfred Domett.

1811—1887.

ALFRED DOMETT, descended from a good English family, was born on 20th May, 1811. Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, he was called to the English Bar in 1841. He emigrated to Nelson, New Zealand, in 1842. During thirty years' residence in New Zealand, he greatly distinguished himself in public life. He held there, from time to time, high political offices, and was Prime Minister of the Colony in 1862 and 1863. He left New Zealand for England in 1871. He died in London on 2nd November, 1887, and was interred in Kensal Green Cemetery.

The object of this Memoir is to notice him as a Poet, leaving to the history of New Zealand, between 1842 and 1871, the record of his eminent services as a colonial statesman.

Mr. Domett was highly gifted with the genius of true poetry. He had a quick and observant mind, a vivid and luxuriant imagination, descriptive power of a high order, a perfect mastery of the English language, a mind of great logical force, and a marvellous faculty of lucid expression. He was not a poet of the passions, but was rather indebted to subtle and brilliant intellectual power, inspired by the spirit of poesy. His defect, which was apparent in his latest work, "*Ranolf and Amohia*," was a tendency to diffusiveness. This defect is, no doubt

(for it is not found in his early poems), mainly attributable to his having been for so many years out of touch with the poetic world, and to his devotion during that time to political life, with only secret and casual worship of his Muse.

Had Mr. Domett's life been so ordered as to allow him to have exclusively cultivated his talents as a poet, there is reason to believe that he might before he died have taken a place not far behind the greatest of our Modern Poets.

At an early age, in 1832, Mr. Domett published some poems, which received favourable notice in *Fraser's Magazine*, and in 1833 he published his first small volume of poems. It was, however, in 1837 that he attracted attention to himself by verses which were published in *Blackwood's Magazine* of April in that year. These short pieces were respectively entitled, "Glee for Winter," "Song for a Family Party," "The Portrait" (of the Duke of Wellington), and "A Christmas Hymn." The critic, Christopher North himself, as chorus to these poems, showed his high sense of their merits. "Alfred Domett," he says, "a new name to our old ears,—but he has the prime virtue of a song-writer,—*a heart*. Again, "Words by the same fine-hearted Alfred Domett." "The Portrait," he considers are "very superior stanzas," "the best lines these we have seen" on the subject. He greatly admires "A Christmas Hymn," and thinks its simple beauty is felt even the more after the magnificent stanzas of Milton's Hymn on the morning of Christ's nativity.

It is remarkable that this Christmas Hymn by Mr. Domett has attracted much attention in America. An American correspondent of Mr. Domett wrote on

23rd May, 1875, that thirty years before Mr. Longfellow had found the Christmas Hymn which he thought much of, and inserted in a small volume which he then compiled. The writer added that the poem is reprinted in the newspaper every Christmas, and is found in most of the compilations of standard poetry. Below is an extract from a letter, 23rd August, 1877, from Mr. Longfellow, referring specially to this Christmas Hymn, and to some other poems written by Mr. Domett :—

“As I opened the volume and looked at its table of contents, a feeling of regret came over me that I had not received it sooner, and in season to have inserted, with your permission, some of the pieces in a collection of ‘Poems of Places’ now in the course of publication. I particularly regret not having ‘A Glimpse of Italy from the Stelvio.’ But it is too late ; Italy and Switzerland are both printed.

“When I come to Palestine, I shall ask your leave to use the ‘Christmas Hymn,’ for which I have lost none of my old admiration. I have just read it over again, and think it equally beautiful in conception and execution.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.”

In *Blackwood's Magazine* of May 1837, four spirited translations from Beranger were also published.

During a lengthened visit shortly afterwards to Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, Mr. Domett wrote occasional poems suggested by scenery and places of historical interest. These poems were referred to by Mr. Longfellow in the extract, given above, from his letter of 28th August, 1877. They were partly

republished in "Flotsam and Jetsam, Rhymes Old and New," which appeared in 1877, subsequently noticed.

In 1842 Mr. Domett left England for New Zealand. His departure was apparently somewhat sudden. Robert Browning, at the time his intimate companion and friend, gave expression to surprise in those well-known verses beginning—

"What's become of Waring
Since he gave us all the slip?"

The verses not only show surprise at Mr. Domett's "new departure" in life, but friendly interest in his fortunes, appreciation of his ability, and anticipation of his future fame.

Thirty years in New Zealand gave Mr. Domett little time for poetry. He devoted himself to public life. Once he translated into excellent verse some old Maori songs; and these translations appear in Sir George Grey's "Polynesian Mythology," published in 1855. But throughout those years he was quietly engaged in storing his mind in a new country with new elements of poetry; and towards the close of his residence in New Zealand he privately worked hard in writing his great poem, "Ranolf and Amohia," which was published in England in 1872. This work was the consummation of thirty years of life engaged in, and illustrious with, public services to New Zealand. Close personal observation of new and strange things, a retentive memory, and poetical genius, created this remarkable epic. As a poem, it is not only a comprehensive and accurate record of natural history, of scenery, and of Aboriginal life in New Zealand, but it abounds with beautiful

imagery, graphic description, argumentative disquisition, all clothed in facile verse. Had the author put aside the story, and broken up the poem into short idyls or sketches, the popularity of the book would probably have been at once gained. As it is, there is reason to hope that time, which dims so much lustre, will, in this instance, when Old New Zealand is traditional, only brighten this great poetic, descriptive, and intellectual work.

Criticisms on "Ronolf and Amohia" from Browning, Tennyson, and Longfellow, are given below.

After apologizing for delay on the ground that he wished to make himself fully master of the contents of the book, Browning writes:—

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *October 18th, 1872.*

"At any rate, I have been a long while without the satisfaction of writing, in however few and poor words, what should be entirely true to you and entirely pleasant to me besides. I don't know, though I cannot but care a good deal how the poem may have been received and valued, but I am sure it is a great and astonishing performance, of very varied beauty and power. I rank it under nothing—taken altogether—nothing that has appeared in my day and generation for subtle yet clear writing about subjects of all others the most urgent for expression, and the least easy in treatment; while the affluence of illustration, and dexterity in bringing to bear upon the story every possible aid from every imaginable quarter, and that with such treasures, new and old, of language, and such continuance of music in modes old and new,—well, I hope I am no more surprised at the achievement than is consistent

with my always having held to the belief that whenever 'Waring' reappeared, some such effect would follow the phenomenon. I see very well where the dissentients may seek their opportunity; but I know where the compensation lies, and don't mind dear Amo being of such 'gentle savagery' as you yourself said long ago. In fine, the poem is worth the thirty years' work and experience, and even absence from home; and whether people accept it now, or let it alone for a while, in the end appreciated it is certain to be. I shall wait a little and read it again, in no fear but that what I believe now will be confirmed hereafter. Meantime take my hearty congratulations.

"Yours very affectionately,

(Signed) "R. BROWNING."

On 3rd December, 1872, Mr. Domett received the following note from Lord (then Mr.) Tennyson. The allusion to the "palm" arose from the word "poem" in Mr. Browning's letter having been misread for "palm."

"I have read a great part of your poem, and agree with your and my friend that it is a remarkable 'palm,' whether his figures mean a branch carried in your hand, or a tree grown on your ground.

"Intellectual subtlety, great power of delineating delicious scenery, imaginative fire,—all these are there. Nevertheless I find in it an *embarras de richesses* which makes it a little difficult to read—to me at least. Many thanks for it, and believe me, faithfully yours,

(Signed) "A. TENNYSON."

Mr. Browning shortly afterwards showed Mr. Domett a note from Mrs. Tennyson, in which she states: "He" (Alfred) "says your friend only wants limitation to be a very considerable poet," and that he would be glad to make his acquaintance. She adds: "Could you not bring him with you here?" That acquaintance was afterwards made, and Mr. Domett was occasionally a guest of Lord Tennyson.

Mr. Longfellow wrote to Mr. Domett on 26th August, 1878:—

"You have sent me a splendid poem. There is ample space in it to move and breathe. It reminds me of the great pictures of the old masters, and of what a Western woman said when she first saw the ocean: 'Well, I am glad at last to see enough of something.'

"Your descriptions of scenery are very powerful and beautiful, and just at present, while I am busy with 'Poems of Places,' you can readily imagine how much they delight me.

"I have taken the liberty of making many extracts for the volume entitled 'Oceanica,' but shall be obliged to put them into an Appendix, for the most part, as the volume was nearly all stereotyped before your book came. This I regret; but as there is no help for it, I trust you will not blame me."

"With great regard,

"Yours faithfully,

(Signed) "HENRY W. LONGFELLOW."

The general opinion of "Ranolf and Amohia" in the press was very favourable. The following

extract is from a review (written, Mr. Domett believed, by Mr. Richard Hutton) in the *Spectator* of 19th October, 1872 :—

“There is power, buoyancy, intellectual subtlety, and vivid picture enough in this book to make out a great many poems. . . . Grand pictures of scenery painted on alternate panels with vigorous and vivid sketches of modern doubts and faiths. . . . The buoyancy of the verse is delightful. . . . The bounding life which runs through the philosophy redeems it from all charge of being abstruse or dry. . . . The animation never dies away. The keen intellect, rendered vivid by imagination, sparkles throughout. . . . There are passages full of a grim sort of humour, also some very delicate and graceful lyrics interspersed. But its claim to be read is its masterly grasp of the conditions of the modern problem as between Theism and Positivism. . . . There can be no doubt that its author is a man of great originality and buoyant imaginative life. No one who really understands the book can help thoroughly enjoying it.”

A revised new edition of “Ranolf and Amohia” was published in 1883. The subordinate title, “A South Sea Daydream,” was changed to “A Dream of Two Lives.”

“Flotsam and Jetsam: Rhymes Old and New,” by Mr. Domett, was published in 1877. The review of this volume in the *Spectator* of 21st April, 1877, praises it much as a whole, but makes certain critical objections, which led Mr. Domett (most unusually on his part) to write in his Diary some comments on that critique. These comments, con-

taining a fair statement of the objections, and being themselves very able and interesting, are here given, as a fitting conclusion to this memoir.

"21st April, 1877—*Spectator critique on 'Flotsam and Jetsam.'* Very flattering in general terms; but some of his particular criticisms have the common fault of common critics of less ability—that, namely, of judging any work from their own point of view instead of that of the worker's. The only fair mode of criticising is that August W. Schlegel insists upon: to ascertain precisely what the artist proposed to himself; then to determine whether the thing proposed is good and worthy; lastly, whether it has been well and worthily carried into execution. Instead of that, even the abler critics often like to show their talent by conceiving an object of their own, more or less associated with the one they criticise,—then a mode of their own of carrying it out; and then condemn the artist they sit in judgment upon for not effecting an object he never proposed to himself to effect at all.

"The chief objection the *Spectator* makes is that the poems are not each governed throughout by one sentiment, or mode of feeling, to be expressed also by a corresponding metrical movement. This is, no doubt, an essential, or at least a merit, in purely lyrical compositions, such especially as songs. But is nothing to be written in stanzas which involves more than *one* mode or shade of feeling? Must a poem be necessarily wholly sad, or wholly gay throughout? Is it absolutely certain that a poem must be bad which ranges from 'grave to gay, from lively to severe'; or follows the various thoughts

and emotions that one subject may raise in the mind that contemplates it? There is obviously no rule but that the poem must be *pleasing*."

"With respect to the poem 'St. Paul's,' the critic says the Basilican style of cathedral was intended to typify the 'Divine unity,—majesty and law'; and argues that the best way of pleading for a Cathedral like St. Paul's against the Gothic type would be to 'let something of Shelley's profound sense of the objective unity rising above all our changeful desires steal subtly through the poem,' etc., 'which awes into silence the many strivings of human desire before the great objective unity of God.' Precisely the reverse of what I wished to represent it as doing. My poem simply says that the Cathedral of St. Paul's being, in its interior, constructed on a system of harmonising circles, was in accordance in that respect with the *Natural* Universe in its highest and grandest manifestations; and therefore was well fitted for a worship which may be called *Natural* Religion, or even *Natural* Theology in its widest sense, which even Science, I believe, will prove, in the end, a handmaid and helpmate to. And that its flowery bright cheerfulness was not typical of anything that awed into silence the strivings of human desire, but of something rather that would attract those strivings towards the elucidation of the mysteries of external Nature and of the internal mind and consciousness of Man; and encourage and stimulate them by shedding a halo of delight and hope and enjoyment around their perpetual exercise."

WILLIAM GISBORNE.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

ALFRED DOMETT.

I.—HOUGOUMONT.

1837.

THE air is sweet and bright and hot,
And loaded fruit-trees lean around ;
Their black unmoving shadows spot
The twinkling grass, the sunny ground ;
No sound of mirth or toil to wrong
The orchard's hush at Hougoumont !

And silver daisies simply deck
With meek bright eyes that orchard-plot ;
And therein lurks, an azure speck,
The tiny starred Forget-me-not—
Fond type of hearts that love and long
In lonely faith, at Hougoumont.

At every step the beetles run,
Where none pursue, in vain concealed ;
Each mailed coat glistens in the sun,
Where none attack, an idle shield !
And ants unheeded scour and throng
The velvet sward at Hougoumont.

The headlong humble-bee alone
Assaults the old and crumbling wall ;
His busy bugle faintly blown,
With many a silent interval ;
Unchecked he tries each nook along
The moss-grown walls at Hougoumont.

Aloft the moaning pigeons coo,
One gurgling note unvaried still ;
The faltering chimes of Braine-le-Heu
The meads with hollow murmurs fill ;
And skylarks shower out all day long
Swift-hurrying bliss o'er Hougoumont.

With transport lulled in dreamy eyes,
June woos you to voluptuous ease ;
At every turn love smiling sighs ;
Dear Nature does her best to please !
How sweet some loved one's loving song,
Couched in green shade at . . . *Hougoumont !*

—Oh, God ! what are we ? Do we then
Form part of this material scene ?
Can thirty thousand thinking men
Fall—and but leave the fields more green ?
'Tis strange—but Hope, be staunch and strong !
It seems so at *sweet* Hougoumont.

II.—A GLEE FOR WINTER.

HENCE, rude Winter ! crabbed old fellow,
Never merry, never mellow !
Well-a-day ! in rain and snow
What will keep one's heart aglow ?
Groups of kinsmen, old and young,
Oldest they old friends among !
Groups of friends, so old and true,
That they seem our kinsmen too !
These all merry all together,
Charm away chill Winter weather !

What will kill this dull old fellow ?
Ale that's bright, and wine that's mellow !
Dear old songs for ever new ;
Some true love, and laughter too ;
Pleasant wit, and harmless fun,
And a dance when day is done !
Music—friends so true and tried—
Whispered love by warm fireside—
Mirth at all times all together—
Make sweet May of Winter weather !

III.—SONG FOR A FAMILY PARTY.

1837.

YE whose veins are like your glasses
From the same old vineyard fed
With a racy generous liquor
Which may Time keep running red !
Come, old friends and near relations,
Take the oath we couch in song ;
Hand-in-hand come pledge it fairly,
All who've known each other long !
Green heads, grey heads, join in chorus,
All who can or cannot sing ;
Put your hearts into your voices
Till we make the old house ring !
Let us swear by all that's kindly,
All the ties of old and young,
We will always know each other
As we've known each other long !
By the house we oft have shaken—
House where most of us were born—
When the dance grew wild and romping,
And we kept it up till morn !

By the old convivial table
Where we oft have mustered strong ;
By the glasses we have emptied
To each other's health so long !

By our schoolboy freaks together,
In old days with mischief rife—
Fellowship when youth on pleasure
Flung away redundant life !
By bereavements mourned in common ;
By the hopes, a flattering throng,
We have felt when home returning,
Parted from each other long !

By the fathers who before us,
Silver-haired together grew,
Who so long revered each other—
Let us swear to be as true !
Swear no selfish jealous feeling
E'er shall creep our ranks among,
E'er make strangers of the kinsmen
Who have known each other long !

No ! whate'er our creed or party,
Riches, rank, or poverty,
With a second home—without one,
True and trusty still we'll be !
Still we'll drink and dance together,
Gather still in muster strong,
And for ever know each other,
As we've known each other long !

IV.—A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

(OLD STYLE. 1837.)

IT was the calm and silent night!—
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea!
No sound was heard of clashing wars;
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars,
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

'Twas in the calm and silent night!
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home!
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;
What recked the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

Within that province far away
Went plodding home a weary boor:
A streak of light before him lay,
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He passed—for nought
Told what was going on within;
How keen the stars! his only thought;
The air how calm and cold and thin,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

O strange indifference !—low and high
Drowsed over common joys and cares :
The earth was still—but knew not why ;
The world was listening—unawares !
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever !
To that still moment none would heed,
Man's doom was linked no more to sever
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago !

It is the calm and solemn night !
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness, charmed and holy *now* !
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given ;
For in that stable lay new-born
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

V.—A GLIMPSE OF ITALY.

FROM THE STELVIO.

NOT yet, not yet, Elysian land,
Must we be lured by thy beguiling !
Not yet may bask in skies so bland,
With such deep witchery smiling !
Not yet may bless in rapture mute,
Their hyacinthine soft illusion !
Nor breathe the Eden flower and fruit
Perfume in wild profusion ;
Where purpled vines entwining toy,
Each luscious laden branch pursuing,
Then o'er them stretch in languid joy
The liquid azure wooing.

Like wanton snakes with vain caress
Their heads in empty sunshine swaying,
While laughs that coy blue loveliness
And mocks their amorous praying!

Where moonlight soothes warm lakes with showers
Of labyrinthine lambent kisses ;
And nightingales in noontide bowers
Tune such untimely blisses !

Not yet we seek town, field and stream,
Rose-lit with Art or classic story ;
Nor yet in dim delight may dream
O'er ground so thick with glory !

From grand regrets, Circean charms
Of soul or sense, we turn our faces,
And seek thy hardier sister's arms—
An Amazon's embraces !

The golden lakes like glittering pages
Around the Royal Righi sleeping ;
The Faulhorn's band of hoary sages
Their stern cold vigil keeping ;

The Gemmi's granite battlements
Hung darkly from the depth of heaven ;
And maddening down the mountain rents,
White torrents headlong driven !

The glacier's sea of huddling cones,
Its tossing tumult tranced in wonder ;
And 'mid mysterious tempest-tones,
The lauwine's sliding thunder.

O joy! to seek bright cliffs—far-spied
O'er morning mist glooms—silvery-gleaming
Through sun-lit fleece-bars, each beside
Its shadow, slowly steaming !

By Lauterbrun ; up Meyringen ;
Between the flanking walls to wander
And airy turrets of the glen
Of fiercely groaning Kander !

To thread the green white-speckled vales
Beneath some rampart so high-towering—
Across the clouds its summit sails !
Then watch black pines low-cowering ;

Or crowding upward, where they pause,
Close-phalanxed storming some great fastness ;
Or strew their slain huge trunks like straws
Upon the mountain's vastness !

While Earth and Sky against us fight,
A savage scowling combination
To struggle up each giant height
In weary exultation !

To climb the skies on mountain sides,
An ocean-waste of peaks commanding ;
And drink the gale the eagle rides,
Breast, heart, and soul expanding !—

This first ;—and then aside we fling
Stern toilsome resolution's armour ;
And rush where all thy Syrens sing,
Thou everlasting charmer !

RANOLF AND AMOHIA.

ALFRED DOMETT.

I.

THE LEGEND OF TAWHAKI.

(BOOK II., CANTO V.)

(1.)

THEN Amohia, tapping Ranolf's arm,
Said, "Listen, *Pakeha!*" and with lifted hand,
Rounding—Enchantress-wise
When double soul she throws into a charm—
The solemn archness of her great black eyes,
Deeplighted like a well,
An ancient legend she began to tell
Of one God-hero of the land,
Of which our faithful lay presents
Precisely the main incidents,
Adorning freely everywhere
The better its intents to reach,
The language so condensed and bare,
Those clotted rudiments of speech.

'Once a race, the Pona-turi, in the oozy depth of
Ocean,
Fierce, uncouth, in gloomy glory, lived where light
is none, nor motion.
More than anything created, Light, their bane, their
death, they hated ;
So for night they ever waited ere ashore they seal-
like clambered ;
To their house Manáwa-tanē—their great mansion,
lofty-chambered,

Whence, if e'er a windy Moon had caught them, you
would see them hieing
Homeward, sable shapes beneath the crisping silver
floating, flying,
Swift as scattered clouds on high their snowy courses
gaily plying.
"Young Tawháki, well he knew them—did they not
his Father mangle ?
Hang his fleshless bones, a scarecrow, ghastly from
their roof to dangle ?
Keep his Mother too, a slave, each day to give them
timely warning
Ere dark Sky from Earth uplifting left the first gold
gap of morning ?

"Vengeance with his Mother then he plotted. So by
daylight hiding
In their house-roof thatch he conched, his slimy foes'
arrival biding.
Darkness comes; they land in swarms; their spacious
house they crowd and cumber ;
Revel through the midnight reckless ; drop at last
in weary slumber.
Like the distant Ocean's roaring, sinks and swells the
mighty snoring.—
Out then steals Tawháki, chuckling ; long ere day
begins to brighten,
Stops up every chink in doorway, window, that could
let the light in.
And the snoring goes on roaring ; or if any Sleeper
yawning
Turned him restless, thinking ' Surely it must now
be near the dawning,'

Growling, 'Slave, is daylight breaking? are you watching? are you waking?'

Still the Mother answered blandly, 'Fear not, I will give you warning—

Sleep, O sleep, my Pona-turi, there are yet no streaks of morning.'

"So the snoring goes on roaring. Now above the mountains dewy,

High the splendour-God careers it—great Te Ra, the Tama Nui.

Sudden cries Tawhákí's Mother, 'Open doors and windows quickly ;

Every stop-gap tear out, clear out! On them pour the sunbeams thickly!'

Through the darksome Mansion — through and through those Sons of Darkness streaming,

Flash the spear-flights of the Day-God—deadly-silent—golden-gleaming!

Down they go, the Pona-turi! vain their struggles, yells and fury!

Like dead heaps of fishes, stranded by the Storm-spray, gaping, staring—

Stiffened so, astonished, helpless, lay they in the sunbeams glaring ;

Fast as shrink upon the shelly beach, those tide-left discs of jelly ;

Fast as leathery fungus-balls, in yellow dust clouds fuming fly off,

So they shrink, they fade, they wither, so those Imps of Darkness die off."

(11.)

“Manáwa-tanë ! ‘ *breath or life*
Of Man ’—no doubt ; a *race at strife*
With Light !—were this a German tale,
Not artless Maori, who could fail
To hit its sense, extract its pith,
So pregnant, palpable a Myth ! ”
Thought Ranolf listening. “ Darkness breeds
A swarm of superstitious creeds
That crush Man’s Spirit till it bleeds ;
His Father—God ! yes, him they clearly
A terror make, a scarecrow merely,
High up—unmoved—dry bones or worse
To his abandoned Universe.
His Mother, Earth—her wealth—her worth—
Her schools—thrones—churches—mind and might—
Enslaved so long, set day and night
To warn and war against the Light,—
Free Thought, the beautiful, the bright !
Whose Sons not seldom from their eyes
Shut out, dissemble and disguise
Its full results—half-veil its rays
(Till they shall gather to a blaze ?)
And fondly feign they nurse no seeds
Of death to all those narrow creeds.
Howe’er that be, the Sun *will* soar !
His foes may slumber, rave, or roar—
Yet Dayspring spreads o’er sea and shore ;
And now even now, for all their din,
The killing LIGHT is streaming in !—
But I attend. Bright-Eyes, proceed ;
Your Myth seems one who runs may read ! ”

II.

THE FOUNTAIN TERRACES, N.Z.

(BOOK IV., CANTO V.)

(1.)

"How beautiful ! how wonderful ! how strange !"

Such words, less thought than mere emotion, well
Might Ranolf with abated breath, in tone
That wonder-stricken to a whisper fell,
For Amo's looks of triumph now exchange :
So fair a vision charmed our loiterers lone,
As at the closing of a sultry day,
In search of some good camping-ground
They paddled up Mahána's Lake,
Where they a small canoe had found
(Which Amo settled they might take),
With little care half hid in sedge,
Flax-fastened to the water's edge—
Its owners clearly far away.
From the low sky-line of the hilly range
Before them, sweeping down its dark-green face
Into the lake that slumbered at its base,
A mighty Cataract—so it seemed—
Over a hundred steps of marble streamed
And gushed, or fell in dripping overflow !
Flat steps, in flights half-circled—row o'er row,
Irregularly mingling side by side ;
They and the torrent-curtain wide,
All rosy-hued, it seemed, with sunsets glow.

But what is this !—no roar, no sound,
Disturbs that torrent's hush profound !
The wanderers near and nearer come—
Still is the mighty Cataract dumb !
A thousand fairy lights may shimmer
With tender sheen, with glossy glimmer,

O'er curve advanced and salient edge
Of many a luminous water ledge ;
A thousand slanting shadows pale
May fling their thin transparent veil
Or deep recess and shallow dent
In many a watery stair's descent ;
Yet, mellow bright, or mildly dim
Both lights and shades—both dent and rim—
Each wavy streak—each warm snow tress—
Stands rigid, mute, and motionless !
No faintest murmur—not a sound—
Relieves that Cataract's hush profound ;
No tiniest bubble, not a flake
Of floating foam is seen to break
The smoothness where it meets the Lake :
Along that shining surface move
No ripples ; not the slightest swell
Rolls o'er the mirror darkly green,
Where, every feature limned so well—
Pale, silent, and serene as death—
The Cataract's image hangs beneath
The Cataract—but not more serene,
More phantom-silent than is seen
The white rose-hued reality above.

(11.)

They paddle past—for on the right,
Another Cataract comes in sight,
Another, broader, grander flight
Of steps—all stainless, snowy bright !
They land—their curious way they track
Near thickets made by contrast black ;
And then that wonder seems to be
A Cataract carved in Parian stone,
Or any purer substance known—

Agate or milk-chalcedony !
 Its showering snow-cascades appear
 Long ranges bright of stalacite,
 And sparry frets and fringes white,
 Thick-falling, plenteous, tier o'er tier ;
 Its crowding stairs, in bold ascent
 Piled up that silvery-glimmering height,
 Are layers, they know, accretions slow
 Of hard silicious sediment.
 For as they gain a rugged road,
 And cautious climb the solid rime,
 Each step becomes a terrace broad—
 Each terrade a wide basin brimmed
 With water, brilliant yet in hue
 The tenderest delicate harebell-blue
 Deepening to violet !

Slowly climb
 The twain, and turn from time to time
 To mark the hundred paths in view—
 Crystalline azure, snowy rimmed—
 The marge of every beauteous pond
 Curve after curve—each lower beyond
 The higher—outswEEPing white and wide,
 Like snowy lines of foam that glide
 O'er level sea-sands lightly skimmed
 By thin sheets of the glistening tide.
 They climb those milk-white flats incrustcd
 And netted o'er with wavy ropes
 Of wrinkled silica. At last—
 Each basin's heat increasing fast—
 The topmost step the pair surmount,
 And lo, the cause of all ! Around,
 Half circling cliffs a crater bound ;

Cliffs damp with dark green moss—their slopes
All crimson stained with blots and streaks—
White-mottled and vermilion-rusted.
And in the midst, beneath a cloud
That ever upward rolls and reeks
And hides the sky with its dim shroud,
Look where upshoots a fuming fount—
Up through a blue and boiling pool
Perennial—a great sapphire streaming,
In that coralline crater gleaming.
Upwelling ever, amethystal,
Ebullient comes the bubbling crystal
Still growing cooler and more cool
As down the porcelain stairway slips
The fluid flint, and slowly drips,
And hangs each basin's curling lips
With crusted fringe, each year increases,
Thicker than shear-forgotten fleeces ;
More close and regular than rows,
Long rows of snowy trumpet-flowers
Some day to hang in garden-bowers,
When strangers shall these wilds enclose.

(111.)

But see ! in all that lively spread
Of blue and white and vermeil red,
How, dark with growths of greenest gloss
Just at the edge of that first ledge,
Calcareous string to cliff-formed bow
(O'er which the hot pool trickles slow)
A little rocky islet peeps
Into the crater-caldron's deeps.
Along the ledge they lightly cross,
And from its midway islet gaze

O'er all the scene, and every phase
 The current takes as down it strays.
 They note where'er, by step or stair,
 By brimming bath, on hollow reef,
 Or hoary plain, its magic rain
 Can reach a branch, a flower, a leaf—
 The branching spray, leaf, blossom gay
 Are blanched and stiffened into stone !
 So round about lurks tracery strewn
 Of daintiest-moulded porcelain ware,
 Or coral wreaths and clusters rare,
 A white flint-foliage !—rather say
 Such fairy work as frost alone
 Were equal to, could it o'erlay
 With tender crust of crystals fair,—
 Fine spikes so delicately piled—
 Not wintry trees, leaf-stripped and bare,
 But summer's vegetation, rich and wild.

III.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

(BOOK VII., CANTO III.)

(I.)

So, all that day, as by a dream possessed—
 On—on—by one idea absorbed opprest—
 For many a mile, as if herself she fled,
 Shunning all human sight the Wanderer sped :
 'To save *him* !' the one hope, one lure to guide
 Her course—all goading sharp despair beside.

But when exhausted nature *would* have rest,
 And, reckless where, she sank upon the ground,
 She was upon the very spot, she found,
 Where Ranolf and herself by rain delayed
 On that first blessed journey once had stayed.

And at a little distance she espied
The cave itself where they had made their nest,—
Laughing, their happy nest !—a yellow cave
Of clayey sandstone scooped out smooth and round
By some long-vanished immemorial wave ;
One of a row that undermined the base
Of the steep hill-side green with tangled fern—
Only a few feet high and deep—a place
Just large enough for those two lovers fond,
And over-draped with drooping bough and frond.
There lay the flattened fern-couch, brown and dry ;
The impress of two forms she could descry,
Still undisturbed by winds or passers-by.
Then did the conquering tenderness return ;
And she resolved (for, but a little space,
The circuit her arrival would delay
At her sad journey's end) she would repair
Once more to those dear Lakes ; the district fair
Where all the bliss of her life's little day
Lay like a vanished treasure ; stored up there—
Quite lost to her—gone—lost and laid away.

(vi.)

Again her journey she pursues,
Her thoughts come back to their accustomed train :
“ Only to save him—only make him know,
Although her joy—her life—her love she lose—
No other Maid could love him so ! ”—
Still fell the sad, slow, melancholy rain ;
And through the white mist hid sky, mountain, plain,
Yet somehow seemed it, on her weary brain
The sunshine of that awful morn
When Ranolf last she saw and left—
Still lay—a solemn sombre light forlorn ;—

Ever she seemed to wander woe begone
 Through endless mazes of a forest lone
 All stripped and bare, of every leaf bereft ;
 While far above her, through the treetops high
 That, leafless, yet shut out the sky,
 A loud monotonous wind for ever roared,
 And those strange, dreary, sombre sunbeams poured ;
 While in the foreground only could be seen
 The lover and the love-joy that had been !
 And every actual outward sight and sound,
 Men, women, places, voices all around,
 Came faintly breaking through this muffling screen,
 This sad bright curtain that would intervene ;
 And only for a moment, face or speech
 Importunate of others, could emerge
 Through that drear desolate light and murmur loud
 As through an ever-circling shroud—
 And her preoccupied perception reach
 And on her absent mind their presence urge.

(vii.)

On—on ! for days as by a dream oppressed—
 Still on—by one idea absorbed—possessed !—
 Directly in her way
 A broad and swollen river lay :
 Her road led through the shallows by its bank,
 Where yellow waters eddying swirled
 Through flax-tufts waving green and tall and rank ;
 But in the midst the raging torrent hurled
 Its waters swift, direct and deep,
 Where often some uprooted tree would sweep—
 A great black trunk unweildly—hastening down
 The flood surcharged with clayey silt—

And dip and heave and plunge and tilt,
Half buried in the wavelets brown.
She paused—but something in her breast
Still urged her on :—she could not rest :
And then those friends whom Kangapo address—
Might they not still her course arrest ?
What if they still should be upon her track—
Would they not meet her if she ventured back?—
She tore her mantle off in haste,
And rolled it up and tightly tied
With flax, and slung it round her waist ;
Then wading, struggled through the high sword-
grass
And stream-bowed tortured blades—a tangled mass,
And struck into the torrent fierce and wide !

Alas ! no strength of limb or will,
No stoutest heart, no swimmer's skill
Could long withstand the headlong weight and force
Of that wild tide in its tumultuous course !—
Soon was she swept away—whirled o'er and o'er—
And hurried out of conscious life
In that o'erwhelming turbulence and roar
Almost without a sense of pain or strife.

Robert Browning.

1812—1889.

THE earliest ancestor of this poet yet known is Robert Browning (1), who was, before his death in 1746, head butler to Sir John Bankes, of Corfe Castle, Dorsetshire. The first of the entries relating to this first Robert Browning's family in the register of Pentridge Church, Dorset, is that of the baptism of his daughter Elizabeth, on October 14, 1719, and the second, that of the baptism of his twin sons, Thomas and Robert (2), on October 1, 1721. Of these, Thomas was the great-grandfather of the poet, while Robert (2) was the great-grandfather of the Robert Browning,—probably once page, and then steward to Lord Radnor,—who, during part of the poet's life, was the tenant of Morley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square, London. Thomas Browning succeeded his uncle Thomas in the tenancy of Woodyates Inn, a small public-house and posting place on the London and Dorchester road, and in 1760 he obtained a lease of it for lives from Lord Shaftesbury. Through that lord's influence Thomas's eldest son Robert (3) was put as a clerk into the Bank of England in 1769. He married a Creole, Miss Tittle of St. Kitts, in 1778, became head of the Bank Stock Office, and died in 1833. His half-Creole son, Robert Browning (4), born July 6th, 1782, reproduced the dark blood of some ancestor of Miss Tittle, and was

so dark that, when a boy, visiting St. Kitts, he was ordered by the beadle in church to come out of the white folks' seats, and sit with the coloured ones. He entered the Bank of England in 1803, became a pay-clerk in the Consols Dividend Office, retired in 1853, and died in Paris in 1866. He married in 1811, a Peckham dissenter, Sarah Ann Wiedemann, the daughter of a mariner, and granddaughter of a sugar-boiler in Dundee; and in the baptismal register of the Congregational Chapel, York Street, Walworth, London, S.E., the poet's birth and baptism are entered thus:—

“Robert, son of Robert Browning and Sarah Ann his wife, was born in the parish of St. Giles, Camberwell, on the 7th day of May, 1812, and was baptised on the 14th day of June, 1812, by me,—George Clayton, Minister.”

The poet's father had not much money; his final salary was only £275; he lived in a small house in Camberwell, and walked daily to the Bank and back. He sent his son to a local dissenting school kept by the Rev. Thomas Ready, at Peckham, till he was near fourteen, then had him privately taught at home, afterwards sent him to the University of London (now University College, Gower Street), for a year, and then to travel. (I believe some relative or friend gave the young man money for the purpose.) After he came home, an aunt of the poet's paid for the publication, in 1833, of his first work, “*Pauline*,” a fragment in 1,030 lines of blank verse, of which W. J. Fox, in the *Monthly Repository*, was the only favourable reviewer, and of which the poet said, in 1838, that it was “written in pursuance of a foolish plan,” and in 1868, “I acknowledge and retain (it) with extreme repugnance, indeed, purely

of necessity . . . good draughtsmanship and right handling were far beyond" me when it was written. In 1834 the poet spent some time in Russia; in 1835 he published his "Paracelsus" (4,152 lines, blank verse and songs); in 1836, he wrote nearly all the prose "Life of Strafford" for John Forster, in Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædia"; in 1837, *Strafford*, an historical tragedy (for Macready, who played it at Covent Garden, May 1, 1837: 2,200 lines of blank verse); in 1840, appeared his difficult *Sordello*, in couplets, with one odd line; 5,981 lines); and in 1841-6 his "Bells and Pomegranates," in eight cheap Nos., with yellow-paper covers, and double columns of text. This last collection of poems proclaimed that an original poet of strong individuality had arisen. It contained (among other pieces) "Saul" (Part 1), "The Glove," "The Confessional," "The Laboratory," "Sibrandus," "The Tomb at St. Praxed's," "Home Thoughts," "The Lost Leader," "Good News," "Flight of the Duchess," "Pied Piper," "Waring," "In a Gondola," "Spanish Cloister," "French Camp," "Count Gismond," and "Cavalier Tunes,"—all thoroughly characteristic works,—besides the seven so-called dramas, *Pippa Passes*, *King Victor and King Charles*, *Return of the Druses*, *Blot on the 'Scutcheon*, *Colombe's Birthday*, *Luria*, and *A Soul's Tragedy*.

Having thus established his fame, with the few competent judges, as a real and original poet, Robert Browning next did the best work of his life, married the true poet and "beautiful soul" Elizabeth Moulton Barrett, who has told us, in her glorious "Sonnets from the Portuguese," how her lover lifted her from her supposed deathbed, into love and

life, and what he was to her.¹ Her frail health necessitated their living abroad, and for the next fifteen years they dwelt mainly at Florence, visiting England at intervals in summer. The husband did the housekeeping, and took all the trouble he could off his wife's shoulders. On March 9th, 1849, their son, Robert Wiedemann Barrett Browning was born. His mother introduced him charmingly into her noble "Casa Guidi Windows," 1851. In 1852, Browning issued his most definitely Christian poem, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," (2,259 four-measure lines, mainly couplets), and in 1852 wrote his introductory essay on Shelley, to Moxon's print of twenty-four spurious letters attributed to the poet, and one genuine letter. In 1855, came out his most liked book, "Men and Women," two volumes, including, among other poems, "Evelyn Hope," "Fra Lippo," "Andrea del Sarto," "Karshish," "Childe Roland," "Bishop Blougram," "In a Balcony," "Saul" (revised, and with a Part II., out of which Saul has dropped), "Holy Cross Day," "The Guardian Angel," "Cleon," "Heretic's Tragedy," "Up at a Villa, Down in the City," "A Woman's Last Word," "By the Fireside," "Any Wife to any Husband," "A Pretty Woman," "The Last Ride," "Master Hugues," etc., wound up by the deep-feelinged "One Word more," to his wife. In 1856, John Kenyon, who had brought the husband and wife together, and (I believe)

¹ Her father, to whom she was devoted, selfishly never forgave her for marrying, and never answered one of her tender letters, pleading for reconciliation. As a West Indian proprietor he may have been more than usually averse to her marriage with the dark olive-hued son of "Dusky Bob," as the poet's father was sometimes called.

helped Browning with money before and after his marriage, left his cousin, the poet's wife, £4,000, and the poet £6,500. On June 29th, 1861, the poet lost his wife, one of the most noble and beautiful souls, and the greatest woman-poet, that ever lived. Browning left Florence as soon as he could after her death, and never entered it again. He went first to Paris, to his father and sister, and then settled at 19, Warwick Crescent, London, on the edge of the Paddington Canal Basin, that his boy of twelve might have the care of his aunt, Miss Arabella Barrett, in Delamere Terrace, close by. There Browning wrote his "*Dramatis Personæ*," 1864, his second most esteemed work, which contains "*Abt Vogler*," "*Rabbi ben Ezra*," "*A Death in the Desert*" (St. John's), "*Caliban*," "*Confessions*," "*Prospice*," "*James Lee*," etc. In the winter of 1868-9 was published his longest and most important poem "*The Ring and the Book*," in which he tells ten times—a mistake in art—and in over 21,000 lines of blank verse (with one lyric), the story of a murder trial in Rome, under different aspects. In 1871 came an unsatisfactory book on Louis Napoleon III., "*Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau, Saviour of Society*," and the poet's most popular Greek book, "*Balaustion's Adventure*, including a transcript from Euripides," an englishing of the *Alcestis*. These were followed in 1872 by the difficult "*Fifine at the Fair*," discussing the relation of husband and wife; in 1873 by a story of French evil and superstition, "*Red Cotton Night-Cap Country; or, Turf and Vowers*"; in 1875 by "*Aristophanes' Apology*, including a Transcript from Euripides (*Hereules Furens*), being the Last Adventure of

Balaustion," and by an unpleasant story of Lord de Ros, "The Inn Album"; in 1876 by a miscellaneous volume "Pacchiarotto, and how he worked in distemper," in which the popular "Hervé Riel," was reprinted (with revisions) from the *Cornhill Magazine*, of 1870; by "The Agamemnon of Æschylus," englished, in 1877; and by "La Saisiaz" (in which the death of his friend Miss Smith, of Liverpool, is told, and immortality discussed), and "The Two Poets of Croisic," in 1878. In 1879 and 1880, appeared the two series of "Dramatic Idylls"; in 1883, the lighter "Jocoseria" (with the fine "Ixion"); in 1884, "Ferishtah's Fancies," and in 1889, as the poet lay on his death-bed, "Asolando."

The poet died at Venice, on December 12th, 1889, and was buried in Westminster Abbey on December 31st, close to Chaucer's tomb.

Browning's leading qualities are intellect, subtlety, originality, and strength, nobleness, faith, hope, love of music and painting, of the Greek tragedians, and men and women, and his chief subject is the soul. Though he, when in the vein, could write perfect verse, he often wanted plastic power and melody, more often lucidity, but in all his work, as Professor Spalding said of Shakspeare's:—

"The presence of a spirit of active and inquiring thought . . . is too evident to require any proof. It is exerted on every object which comes under his notice; . . . all his characters . . . this quality colours. Imagination . . . is rebuked by the presence of a mightier influence; she is but the hand-maid of the active and piercing understanding."²

² Authorship of "The Two Noble Kinsmen," 1883, pp. 20, 21.

It is to this restless action of the mind,—always asking, “Why are you what you are?” “How did this result come about?”—that the spoiling of many of Browning’s poems is due. A characteristic instance occurs in his “One word more,” to his wife. It is a poem that should be full charged with emotion, but Browning must stop in the middle of it to ask “Wherefore?” Why does an artist want once in his life to give up his own art and express his love for a woman in another art, “be the man and leave the artist”? and he writes Sections ix., x., and xi. of his poem, on Moses, to answer his question; then he takes up his subject again, his love for his own wife. His often horrible double and forced rhymes were mainly due to his habit of writing quasi-nonsense, stanzas, or sonnets, to any set of the most incongruous rhymes that girl-friends or others would give him. His want of lucidity was also frequently due to his knack of ryming leading him to put into couplets and even stanzas what should have been in blank verse: see a notable instance in “Parleyings”:—

A full disclosure? Such would outrage law.

Law deals the same with soul and body: seek
Full truth my soul may, when some babe, I saw

A new-born weakling, starts up strong—not weak—
Man every whit, absolved from earning awe,

Pride, rapture, if the soul attains to wreak
Its will on flesh, at last can thrust, lift, draw,
As mind bids muscle,—mind which long has striven,

Painfully urging body’s impotence
To effort whereby—once law’s barrier riven,

Life’s rule abolished—body might dispense
With infancy’s probation, straight be given—

Not by foiled darings, fond attempts back-driven,
Fine faults of growth, brave sins which saint when shriven,—
To stand full statured in magnificence.

“Works,” xvi. 118.

His writing dramatic dialogue in stanzas, as in "Apollo and the Fates" ("Works," xvi. 111, etc.), was an unjustifiable recurrence to fifteenth-century barbarism, while his putting an account of a chemical experiment into a stanza, and supposing it part of a Lyric,

Once I saw a chemist take a pinch of powder
—Simple dust it seemed—and half-unstop a phial.
—Out dropped harmless dew. "Mixed nothings make,"—
 quoth he—
"Something!" So they did: a thunderclap, but louder—
Lightning-flash, but fiercer—put spectators' nerves to
 trial:
Sure enough we learned what was, imagined what might
 be.—"Ferishtah," "Works," xvi. 51.

must have been due to temporary aberration. But admitting, as all honest critics must, the technical blemishes in his art, and that his characterization was in sepia rather than in full glow of colour like Shakspeare's, we can claim without fear of contradiction that Browning was one of the most original and subtle poets who ever wrote, that he was the strongest poet since Milton, that he was manly and noble in all his work, that he sounded his clarion of hope and faith to cheer all who were in despondence and doubt, that he entered into the thoughts and lives of men and women of many times and lands, and recreated them for us, and that he has enriched the world with many poems that it will not willingly let die. As specimens of his originality, take "Caliban" and "Karshish"; of his subtlety "Clive" and "The Glove"; of his strength, "Prospice," and the storms in *Pippa*,—

"OTTIMA. Buried in woods we lay, you recollect;
Swift ran the searching tempest overhead;

And ever and anon some bright white shaft
 Burned thro' the pine-tree roof, here burned and there,
 As if God's messenger thro' the close wood screen
 Plunged and replunged his weapon at a venture,
 Feeling for guilty thee and me : then broke
 The thunder like a whole sea overheard.—“Works,” iii. 23.

and at the end of the Pope in “The Ring and the Book” —

I stood at Naples once, a night so dark
 I could have scarce conjectured there was earth
 Anywhere, sky or sea or world at all :
 But the night's black was burst through by a blaze—
 Thunder struck blow on blow, earth groaned and bore,
 Through her whole length of mountain visible :
 There lay the city thick and plain with spires,
 And, like a ghost disshrouded, white the sea.
 So may the truth be flashed out by one blow,
 And Guido see, one instant, and be saved.—x. 2119—2128.

match these in English poetry if you can;—of his humour when playful, “Up at a Villa, Down in the City”; when grim, “Holy Cross Day”; of his pregnancy and reserve of power, “My Lost Duchess”; of his vividness, “Childe Roland” and “Count Gismond”; of his love of music, “Abt Vogler”; of his love of art, “Andrea del Sarto,” and “Fra Lippo”; of his meditative power, “Rabbi ben Ezra”; of his view of this life and the future one, of God and the world, “La Saisiaz” and “Easter Eve”; of the unselfishness of the hero, “Echetlos” and “Hervé Riel”; of love, “One way of Love” and “The Last Ride”; of his own love for his poet-wife, “One Word More” and “Oh, Lyric, Love”; of his care for Euripides and Greece, “Balaustion's Adventure”; of the spirit in which he faced the world, “The Epilogue to Asolando.”

Browning was above all an analyser, so that he did best with men and women singly, and wrote best in monologue. He was not dramatic in the sense that Shakspeare is, showing character by men in action and reaction on one another. He called up his men and women separately, set himself to get into the soul of each, and make each show how—granting that he or she had a strong Browning tinge—each had developed. So Pippa, his charming little silk girl, philosophises like Browning, so does his beautiful child-wife and mother Pompilia, so do all his men and women, more or less. Even his Pope, who orthodoxly believed in hell and eternal damnation, is made to profess Browning's Universalism, or the Salvation of all Folk, at the end of Section x. of "The Ring and the Book." Yet Browning has left us a gallery of creations of wonderful range and reality; and though his dramas will not act—being written by a man with no practical knowledge of the stage—they will read, and some of his characters live.

He used outward nature but seldom in his art, and mainly as an illustration of some soul-truth, yet when all his vivid bits of description of scenery are put together as they have been by Mr. Howard Pearson in the "*Browning Society's Papers*," vol. ii., pp. 103-8, it is wonderful how effective they are, as you follow him through the hours of the day from dawn to dusk.

All dumb creatures Browning loved; and he was indignant at the experiments of vivisectionists. Strong himself, all strong-natured folk feel his verse akin to them, while the weak are attracted and helped by it. Who that has ever faced rival in

fight, or been beside one in a race, doesn't recognise this as made by a man?—

“Was the trial sore?
Temptation sharp? Thank God a second time!
Why comes temptation but for man to meet
And master and make crouch beneath his foot,
And so be pedestalled in triumph? Pray
‘Lead us into no such temptations, Lord!’
Yea, but, O Thou whose servants are the bold,
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,
That so he may do battle and have praise!”
“Ring and Book,” “The Pope,” x., 1183-92.

But, unlike Carlyle, Browning always set love above power. His notion of the hero is, that he should be unnamed—“the great deed,” all. He tells the rejected lover not to curse the woman who has refused him, but to bless and thank her for the memory of her love. In all his views of life he was noble and unselfish.

But we cannot, alas! point to any poem in which Browning voiced many of the hopes of Victorian England, the Greater Britain,—a future Venice, with the seas for streets,—the rise of workers to their fitting place, the nationalization of the land, the rule of the people by elected folk alone, the complete triumph of science over nature, the federation of the world, no Turk or tyrant there. Browning cared for the individual, the soul; but he enlarged his hereditary Calvinism till it embraced the world; all mankind were the elect; this earth was their training ground, this life their time of probation, and if they failed in it, yet they were to be brought home, somehow, somewhen. But sure as Browning was of God,

firmly as he believed in the soul, he was honest enough to say that he knew—or thought he knew—for himself alone, and that what carried conviction to him might be nonsense to other minds. He had seen almost nothing of the dire lives of want and woe, of poverty and disease, that go far to crush hope out of those who live in their midst:—

“God’s in his heaven;
All’s right with the world!”

is not an easy song to the midwifery student or the district visitor at the east end of London;—but even to workers there, Browning’s cheery optimism, his buoyant faith, his strong assertion that God was on their side, and was but using all this ill to work for good, were a comfort and motive that nerved them to fresh effort, and made them bless the poet and his art.

It is for posterity, not for us Victorians, to settle Browning’s place in the rank of English poets; his gold and clay are strangely mixed; but of this we are sure, that so long as manly men and womanly women of our race live, so long will Robert Browning be honoured and loved.

F. J. FURNIVALL.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN;

A CHILD'S STORY.

(WRITTEN FOR, AND INSCRIBED TO, W. M. THE YOUNGER.)

ROBERT BROWNING.

I.

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city ;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side ;
A pleasanter spot you never spied ;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

II.

Rats !
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soups from the cooks' own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

III.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking :
" 'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy ;
And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine

What's best to rid us of our vermin !
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease ?
Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a racking
 To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing ! ”
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV.

An hour they sat in council.
 At length the Mayor broke silence :
“ For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell,
 I wish I were a mile hence !
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap ! ”
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap ?
“ Bless us,” cried the Mayor, “ what's that ? ”
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat ;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
“ Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat ! ”

V.

“ Come in ! ”—the Mayor cried, looking bigger :
And in did come the strangest figure !

His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in ;
There was no guessing his kith and kin :
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one : " It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone ! "

VI.

He advanced to the council-table :
And, " Please your honours," said he, " I'm able,
By means of a secret charm to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw !
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper ;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque ;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
" Yet," said he, " poor piper as I am

In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats ;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampyre-bats :
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders ? ”
“ One ? fifty thousand ! ”—was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII.

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while ;
Then like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled ;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered ;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling ;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,

Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished !
—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary :
Which was, “ At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe :
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks :
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, ‘ Oh rats, rejoice !
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon ! ’
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, ‘ Come, bore me ! ’
—I found the Weser rolling o’er me.”

VIII.

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
“ Go,” cried the Mayor, “ and get long poles,
Poke out the nests and block up the holes !
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats ! ”—when suddenly, up the face

Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

IX.

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X.

The Piper's face fell, and he cried
"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!"

And folks who puts me in a passion
May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI.

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII.

Once more he stept into the street
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by,

—Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say, all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was use to say,—
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,

And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagle's wings :
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more !

XIV.

Alas, alas for Hamelin !
There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says that heaven's gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South
To offer the Piper, by word of month,
Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
" And so long after what happened here
On the Twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six : "
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,

They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.

And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

xv.

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers !
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise !

“HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS
FROM GHENT TO AIX.”

16—.

ROBERT BROWNING.

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;
“Good speed !” cried the watch, as the gate bolts undrew
“Speed !” echoed the wall to us galloping through ;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

’Twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
At Duffeld, ’twas morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime
So, Joris broke silence with, “Yet there is time !”

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
’To stare thro’ the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;
And one eye’s black intelligence,—ever that glance
O’er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !

And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay spur !
" Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
" We'll remember at Aix "—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff ;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And " Gallop," gasped Joris, " for Aix is in sight !"

" How they'll greet us !"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer ;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground ;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

EVELYN HOPE.

ROBERT BROWNING.

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed ;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass ;
Little has yet been changed, I think :
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died !
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name ;
It was not her time to love ; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was nought to each, must I be told ?
We were fellow mortals, nought beside ?

No, indeed ! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love,
I claim you still, for my own love's sake !

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few :
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay ?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me :
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !
What is the issue ? let us see !

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while.
My heart seemed full as it could hold ?
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep :
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand !
There, that is our secret : go to sleep !
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

MY LAST DUCHESS.

FERRARA.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THAT'S my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now : Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her ? I said
" Frà Pandolf " by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there ; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek : perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say " Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or " Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat : " such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say ?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed ; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one ! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each

Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good ! but
thanked

Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling ? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me ; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping ; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her ; but who passed without
Much the same smile ? This grew ; I gave commands ;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise ? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed ;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me !

ANDREA DEL SARTO.

(CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER.")

ROBERT BROWNING.

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia ; bear with me for once :
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart ?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept to his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it ? tenderly ?
Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love ;
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if—forgive now—should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this !
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither ; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require :
It saves a model. So ! keep looking so—
My serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds !
—How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there ! oh, so sweet—
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,

And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks—no one's : very dear, no less.
You smile ? why, there's my picture ready made.
There's what we painters call our harmony !
A common greyness silvers everything,—
All in a twilight, you and I alike
—You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know),—but I, at every point ;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top ;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside ;
The last monk leaves the garden ; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh ? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now, looks the life he makes us lead ;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are !
I feel he laid the fether : let it lie !
This chamber for example—turn your head—
All that's behind us ! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak :
And that cartoon, the second from the door
—It is the thing, Love ! so such things should be—
Behold Madonna !—I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly.
I do not boast, perhaps : yourself are judge,

Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it !
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past :
I do what many dream of, all their lives,
—Dream ? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive—you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter)—so much less !
Well, less is more, Lucrezia : I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men ! at a word—
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken ; what of that ? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered ; what of that ?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care ?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for ? All is silver-grey

Placid and perfect with my art : the worse !
I know both what I want and what might gain,
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!" No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art—for it gives way
That arm is wrongly put—and there again—
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak : its soul is right,
He means right—that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm ! and I cou'd alter it :
But all the play the insight and the stretch—
Out of me, out of me ! And wherefore out ?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you !
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe and follows to the snare—
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind !
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged
"God and the glory ! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that ?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo !
Rafael is waiting : up to God all three !"
I might have done it for you. So it seems :

Perhaps not. All is as God over-rules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look,—
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts,—
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know—

Tis done and past ; 'twas right, my instinct said ;
Too live the life grew, golden and not grey,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way ?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was—to reach and stay there ; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost ?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine !
" Rafael did this, Andrea painted that ;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife—"
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence ; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
" Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours !"
To Rafael's !— And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line should go !
Ay, but the soul ! he's Rafael ! rub it out !
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he ? why, who but Michel Agnolo ?
Do you forget already words like those ?)

If really there was such a chance, so lost,—
Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed !
This hour has been an hour ! Another smile ?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend ?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now ; there's a star ;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall.
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love,—come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me : oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with !
Let us but love each other. Must you go ?
That Cousin here again ? he waits outside ?
Must see you—you, and not with me ? Those loans ?
More gaming debts to pay ? you smiled for that ?
Well, let smiles buy me ! have you more to spend ?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth ?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The grey remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more—the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time ! I want you at my side
To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you ? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.

I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs ; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you ? Ah, but what does he,
The Cousin ! what does he to please you more ?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter it ?
The very wrong to Francis !—it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied.
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own ? you see
How one gets rich ! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died :
And I have laboured somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try !
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have ?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance--
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover—the three first without a wife,
While I have mine ! So—still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia—as I choose.
Again the Cousin's whistle ! Go, my Love.

ABT VOGLER.

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPORIZING UPON THE MUSICAL
INSTRUMENT OF HIS INVENTION.)

ROBERT BROWNING.

I.

WOULD that the structure brave, the manifold
music I build,

Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when
Solomon willed

Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,
Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and of aim,

Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep
removed,—

Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable
Name,

And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the
princess he loved !

II.

Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful building of
mine,

This which my keys in a crowd pressed and importuned
to raise !

Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dispart now
and now combine,

Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their master
his praise !

And one would bury his brow with a blind plunge
down to hell,

Burrow awhile and build, broad on the roots of things,
Then up again swim into sight, having based me my
palace well,

Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the nether springs.

III.

And another would mount and march, like the
excellent minion he was,
Ay, another and yet another, one crowd but with
many a crest,
Raising my rampired walls of gold as transparent as
glass,
Eager to do and die, yield each his place to the
rest :
For higher still and higher (as a runner tips with
fire,
When a great illumination surprises a festal
night—
Outlining round and round Rome's dome from space
to spire)
Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of
my soul was in sight.

IV.

In sight ? Not half ! for it seemed, it was certain,
to match man's birth,
Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I ;
And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort
to reach the earth,
As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to
scale the sky :
Novel splendours burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt
with mine,
Not a point nor peak but found, and fixed its
wandering star ;
Meteor-moons, balls of blaze : and they did not pale
nor pine,
For earth had attained to heaven, there was no
more near nor far.

v.

Nay more ; for there wanted not who walked in the
glare and glow,
Presences plain in the place ; or, fresh from the
Protoplast,
Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind
should blow,
Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their
liking at last ;
Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through
the body and gone,
But were back once more to breathe in an old
world worth their new :
What never had been, was now ; what was, as it
shall be anon ;
And what is,—shall I say, matched both ? for I was
made perfect too.

vi.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a
wish of my soul,
All through my soul that praised as its wish
flowed visibly forth,
All through music and me ! For think, had I
painted the whole,
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process
so wonder-worth :
Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect
proceeds from cause,
Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the
tale is told ;
It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list en-
rolled ;—

VII.

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that
can,
Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo,
they are !
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed
to man,
That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth
sound, but a star.
Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is
naught ;
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all
is said :
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my
thought :
And, there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider
and bow the head !

VIII.

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I
reared ;
Gone ! and the good tears start, the praises that
come too slow ;
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that
he feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing
was to go.
Never to be again ! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance : is this your
comfort to me ?
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my
mind
To the same, same self, same love same God :
ay, what was, shall be.

IX.

Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable
Name ?

Builder and Maker, Thou, of houses not made with
hands !

What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever
the same ?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy
power expands ?

There shall never be one lost good ! What was,
shall live as before ;

The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying
sound ;

What was good, shall be good, with, for evil, so
much good more ;

On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven, a
perfect round.

X.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good
shall exist ;

Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good,
nor power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for
the melodist

When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth
too hard,

The passion that left the ground to lose itself in
the sky,

Are music sent up to God by the lover and the
bard ;

Enough that he heard it once : we shall hear it
by-and-by.

XI.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence

For the fulness of the days ? Have we withered
or agonized ?

Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing
might issue thence ?

Why rushed the discords in but that harmony
should be prized ?

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal
and woe :

But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the
ear ;

The rest may reason and welcome ; 'tis we
musicians know.

XII.

Well, it is earth with me ; silence resumes her reign :

I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce.
Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord
again,

Sliding by semitones, till I sink to the minor,—yes,
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien
ground,

Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into
the deep ;

Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my resting-
place is found,

The C major of this life ; so, now I will try to
sleep.

RABBI BEN EZRA.

ROBERT BROWNING.

GROW old along with me !
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made :
Our times are in His hand
Who saith "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all nor be
afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned "Nor Jove, nor Mars ;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends
them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast :
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men ;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-
crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To That which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive !
A spark disturbs our clod ;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go !
Be our joys three-parts pain !
Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;
Learn, nor account the pang ; dare, never grudge the throe !

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail :
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me :
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play ?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way ?

Yet gifts should prove their use :
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn :
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole ;
Should not the heart beat once " How good to live and learn ? "

Not once beat "Praise be Thine !
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now love perfect too :
Perfect I call Thy plan :
Thanks that I was a man !
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what Thou shalt do ? "

For pleasant is this flesh ;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest ;
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best !

Let us not always say
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole !"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh
helps soul !"

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term :
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute ; a god though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new :
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armour to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby ;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold :
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame :
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know, being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the grey :
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth : here dies another day.'

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain :
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day :
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedest age : wait death nor be afraid !

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past !
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right ? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last !

Now, who shall arbitrate ?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive :
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me : we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that : whom shall my soul believe ?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price ;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice :

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account ;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped ;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor ! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool ! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall ;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure :
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be :
Time's wheel runs back or stops : Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest :
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press ?
What though, about thy rim,
Scully-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress ?

Look not thou down but up !
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips a-glow !
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what need'st thou
with earth's wheel ?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moulded men ;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I,—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colours rife,
Bound dizzily,—mistake my end, to slake Thy thirst :

So, take and use Thy work :
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim !
My times be in Thy hand !
• Perfect the cup as planned !
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same

PROSPICE.

ROBERT BROWNING.

FEAR death ?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe ;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go :
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last !
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest !

HERVÉ RIEL.

ROBERT BROWNING.

I.

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred
 ninety-two,
 Did the English fight the French,—woe to France !
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through
 the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of
 sharks pursue,
 Came crowding ship on ship to Saint-Malo on the
 Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in
 full chase ;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship,
 Damfreville ;
 Close on him fled, great and small,
 Twenty-two good ships in all ;
And they signalled to the place :
“ Help the winners of a race !
 Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or,
 quicker still,
 Here's the English can and will ! ”

III.

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt
 on board ;
“ Why, what hope or chance have ships like these
 to pass ? ” laughed they :

“ Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage
scarred and scored,—
Shall the ‘Formidable’ here, with her twelve and
eighty guns,
Think to make the river-mouth by the single
narrow way,
Trust to enter—where ’tis ticklish for a craft of
twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside ?
Now, ’tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring ? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay !”

IV.

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate :
“ Here’s the English at our heels ; would you have
them take in tow
All that’s left us of the fleet, linked together stern
and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound ?
Better run the ships aground !”
(Ended Damfreville his speech.)
“ Not a minute more to wait !
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on
the beach !
France must undergo her fate.

V.

“ Give the word !” But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard ;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid
all these

—A Captain ? A Lieutenant ? A Mate—first, second,
third ?

No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete !

But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville
for the fleet,

A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

VI.

And "What mockery or malice have we here ?"
cries Hervé Riel :

"Are you mad, you Malouins ? Are you cowards,
fools, or rogues ?

Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the
soundings, tell

On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river
disembogues ?

Are you bought by English gold ? Is it love the
lying's for ?

Morn and eve, night and day,

Have I piloted your bay,

Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.

Burn the fleet and ruin France ? That were worse
than fifty Hagues !

Sirs, they know I speak the truth ! Sirs, believe
me there's a way !

Only let me lead the line,

Have the biggest ship to steer,

Get this 'Formidable' clear,

Make the others follow mine,

And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,

Right to Solidor past Grève,

And there lay them safe and sound ;

And if one ship misbehave,—
—Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!"
cries Hervé Riel.

VII.

Not a minute more to wait.
"Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!"
cries its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace
See the noble fellow's face
As the big ship with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide
sea's profound!
See, safe thro' shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the
ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past.
All are harboured to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"—sure as fate
Up the English come—too late!

VIII.

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,

Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the
Rance!
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's coun-
tenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
"This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not
Damfreville."

X.

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:

"Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it
but a run?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the
Belle Aurore!"
Then he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

XI.

Name and deed alike are lost :
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell ;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to
wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence
England bore the bell.
Go to Paris : rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank !
You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé
Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse !
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife the
Belle Aurore !

THE RING AND THE BOOK.

1868-9.

ROBERT BROWNING.

*TO ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING, IN
HEAVEN.*

(FROM BOOK I.)

O LYRIC Love, half angel and half bird,
And all a wonder and a wild desire,—
Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,
Took sanctuary within the holier blue,
And sang a kindred soul out to his face ;—
Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart—
When the first summons from the darkling earth
Reached thee amid thy chambers, blanched their blue,
And bared them of the glory—to drop down,
To toil for man, to suffer or to die,—
This is the same voice : can thy soul know change ?
Hail then, and hearken from the realms of help !
Never may I commence my song, my due
To God who best taught song by gift of thee,
Except with bent head and beseeching hand—
That still, despite the distance and the dark,
What was, again may be ; some interchange
Of grace, some splendour once thy very thought,
Some benediction anciently thy smile :
—Never conclude, but raising hand and head
Thither where eyes, that cannot reach, yet yearn
For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,
Their utmost up and on,—so blessing back
In those thy realms of help, that heaven thy home,
Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face makes proud,
Some wanness where, I think, thy foot may fall !

ASOLANDO.

1889.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE EPILOGUE.

AT the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me ?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken !
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly ?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drive !
—Being—who ?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would
triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer !
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
Strive and thrive !” cry “Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here !”

William Bell Scott.

1812—1890.

IF ever there was a poet to whom has been granted the "audience fit though few" after which Milton sought, it is William Bell Scott. Holding strongly views as to the province of poetry and the functions of the poet the reverse of those now current, he has sought, deliberately it may be held, at least with success to repel those who seek in poetry mere reposeful and sensuous delight. A philosopher and a mystic, with firm faith in human progress, and eager interest in all problems of social and intellectual regeneration and development, he holds that though poetry "must affect us like music or wine, . . . it must certainly have wisdom, like an instinct, directing it from within" (Preface to "Poems," 1875). With an enthusiasm worthy of Shelley, and in language simple as that of Wordsworth, he puts forward problems as hard to solve as are to be traced in Browning. No expectation has he that the world will suspend its occupations to listen to him. With an independence as sturdy and assertive as his originality he issued his early works in editions "rather fitted to his convenience, than to arrest attention" (Preface to "Poems," 1875). And in selecting from his work matter for republication he has, with rare power of self-control, struck out whatever has been better treated by succeeding

writers, or has in any manner become fully revealed to the public.

It is in the nature of work constructed on such lines to inspire with enthusiasm those whom facility fatigues and sham convictions disenchant. Mr. Scott has numbered accordingly among his friends, the most ardent workers in literature and art, has enjoyed the closest intimacy with the leaders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, whom he preceded by a decade, and with whom he has erroneously been classed, has exchanged dedications with Mr. Swinburne, and has divided with Rossetti, so far as this country and generation are concerned, the distinction of being pre-eminently the painter-poet.

Much effort has been wasted in seeking for the sources of Mr. Scott's inspiration, and Shelley has been described as his early model. A poet such as Shelley, on whom Mr. Scott wrote one of his earliest poems, could not fail to leave some impress on juvenile work. Slight indeed is this. Judging Mr. Scott as poet and painter the influence of Blake seems stronger than that of Shelley. Seldom, however, has a writer been less swayed by the work of predecessor or contemporary, or shown a more decided, it may almost be said aggressive, individuality. In the search after influences the surroundings of early life, and the transmission of heredity count more, in this case at least, than the worship of early models by which the poet's vision is often coloured.

A Scotchman, descended from a family of respectable yeomen and burgesses in Lanarkshire, he inherited a Puritan, or at least a Covenanting, strain,

with which was blended a scarcely to be expected taste for art. His father, Robert Scott, had no mean talent as an engraver, and his brother David, as is well known, was a distinguished painter and illustrator. William Bell Scott, his second name the maiden name of his mother, came as one of a second family, the whole of a previous brood, with the exception of David, having died before his father migrated to St. Leonards near Edinburgh. To this experience of loss was due in his parents a depression and melancholy, "darkening into gloom at times, and scarcely ever clearing off" ("Memoirs of David Scott, R.S.A.," by William Bell Scott, 1850, p. 15). Misfortune has, as our poet observes, a profound effect on the Scottish character, its memory being kept alive as a duty, until the Scot lives "as much in a mourning as in a religious turn of mind." Granting these things, the intellectual growth and development of Scott, are not even a mystery. Metaphysics and religion have been of course common accompaniments of Scottish intellectual growth. When to these things are added the close culture of art, a tendency to mysticism, and the desire to reconcile to devotional aspiration the intellectual questionings from which the thinker cannot escape, a natural result is work such as Scott has produced. His life of his brother is indeed to a great extent, though unconsciously, his own *apologia*. Mr. Scott also left behind him for posthumous publication an autobiography in which his early life is very fully described.

Born in 1812, he was educated at the High School, Edinburgh, and "entered the antique class of the Academy of the Government Trustees for the advancement of Art" (Memoir by H. Buxton Forman

in "Celebrities of the Century"). His first printed poem, a rhapsody, "to the memory of Shelley," written in 1831, appeared the following year in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*. "The Incantation of Havor" and "The Dance of Death," were published in *The Edinburgh University Souvenir* in 1834. These poems and "Anthony," which appeared about a score years ago, in *The Fortnightly Review*, and belongs to the same epoch, are fully prophetic of his later manner. In 1836 he left Edinburgh for London, and in 1844 established a Government School of Design at Newcastle. He exhibited his first great picture in 1838; and sent in all to the Royal Academy seven pictures, nine to the British Association, and four to the Suffolk Street Exhibition. "Hades; or, The Transit and the Progress of Mind," an ode, saw the light in 1838, and was succeeded in 1846 by "The Year of the World." "Poems by a Painter" belongs to 1854. "Ballads, Studies from Nature, Sonnets," etc., to 1875, and "The Poet's Harvest Home" to 1882.

In his earliest poems, Mr. Scott displays full sincerity of conviction and of workmanship. "Hades" extracts from decay and death the most benignant and consolatory lesson, is unequal in style, and has a weird unworldliness which is characteristic of most of its author's efforts in art. In "The Year of the World" a deeper yet kindred note is struck. The poem deals with redemption from the fall; and the name is the Pythagorean term used two thousand years ago to convey the idea of "the entire cycle of time in connection with human history on earth" (Preface to "The Year of the

World"). Through the various phases of development Lyremmos or Energy, is led in pursuit of Mneme, or Peace. A scheme of contemplative absorption, almost paraphrased from the Bhagavat Geeta, should have interest for the present generation, which affects Buddhist tendencies, and the various cosmogonies of Hindoo, Egyptian, and Chaldee are traced. One who compares this work with that supremely fine poem "The Sphinx considered as the Symbol of Religious Mystery," will have a full insight into the sanguine, attractive, and mystical creed of a great thinker and poet. In the sonnets, of which Mr. Scott is prolific, the significance of the idea is in advance of beauty of execution; and in ballads, of which he has written many, imagination is in excess of colour. The work is all, however, fine and inspiring, and the temperance of diction has a charm all its own. A knowledge of the artist's work as a painter and an illustrator is necessary to a full grasp of his poetic accomplishment; and a study of his prefaces to editions of the poets will reveal fully his poetic theory. With these, however, and with his substantive works on his brother, on William Blake, and on Albert Durer, three sympathetic subjects, we are not concerned. Very much of his best pictorial work is to be seen at Penkill Castle, Ayrshire, the seat of his friend Miss Boyd, the staircase of which is decorated with a series of mural paintings in encaustic, illustrating the poem of "The King's Quair." For this building, in which Mr. Scott long resided as a guest, and in which he died 22nd November, 1890, he designed a mediæval hall. Views of this interesting and picturesque edifice are to be found in the

etchings to the edition of "Poems" of 1875, illustrated by the author and Mr. L. Alma Tadema. It is also commemorated in "The Old Scotch House," a poem in two parts, from which a Sonnet, No. IV., is given in the selection which follows. If Mr. Scott had written but the one poem, "The Sphinx," his name would be remembered.

JOSEPH KNIGHT.

POEMS AND BALLADS.

1875.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

I.—TO THE SPHINX

(CONSIDERED AS THE SYMBOL OF RELIGIOUS MYSTERY.)

I.

THE silence and the darkness of the night
The busiest day doth follow : moonless nights
And starless track Time's footsteps ; strongest things
Still crumbling back into the caverned past.
But thou, the earliest legend wrought in stone,
The rock-bound riddle of an infant world,
Within that terrible darkness standest still,
Questioning now and then.

I shut my ears to this day's cares, and hear,
Vaguely across the centuries, the clang
Of Coptic hammers round thy half-freed limbs :
Slaves with their whip-armed masters see I there ;
Thousands like ants ; and priests, with noiseless feet,
Passing around them with a serpent-coil ;
And kings in crowned hoods, with greatsceptres borne
Before them ;—red men, and brown-skinned, and
swart,

From Nubia or the Isles : what sad resolve,
What fear or inspiration or despair,
Drive on those hordes that know not what they do ?

II.

Oracular, impassive, open-eyed,—
Open-eyed without vision ; answerless,
Yct questioning for life or death, as hath
In later days been fabled,—round thy rest
The scarabee, the snake, the circle winged,
And other symbols dark were as thy food,

Prepared for thee with cruellest rites and oaths
Of secrecy ; innumerable gods
Made life about thee slave to death, seared up
Unchangeably, and in the grave wound in
With undivulged negations of all hopes :
So that the dead could only render back
The sense of these dim-shadowed myths and creeds,
That thou wert set to guard. Perhaps the bones
Of Cheops, in his firmest of all tombs,
Shook to disclose thy password from the dust
And free man's heart by knowing he cannot know—
Shook with the priests' slow steps passed evermore
Bearing another Pharaoh home,
With baseless rights and fantasies of faiths,
Devised like clashing cymbals and loud drums
To drown the victim's shrieks.
And did not Cleopatra's eager blood
Throb at the thought of thee,
While her wide purple flaunted in the sun,
And the white smoke of her fine perfumes spread
From Cidnus to the unknown waste where now
Ships pass uniting hemispheres by trade ?
And yet, maybe, she knew, because a queen,
The riddle of thy birth and of thy watch
Before the temple door. Her feverish brain
Left her no heart except for Antony.
And then, as now,
The winged seeds of autumn died amidst
The whirling sand-waste. Not beneath thy shade
The sower walked. Joy fled thee, and desire
Passed there and knelt upon the marble floor ;
But still the passionate heart believes, and thou,—
Thou sittest voiceless without priest or prayer
As if thou wert self-born.

III.

And yet to whom, O Sphinx !
Hast thou not ministered, and dost thou not,
If we interpret rightly those blank eyes ?
Beside the Isis-gates, the gates of stone,
Have blood-red heroes and the sons of gods
Uncrowned to thee. Around thy great smooth feet
The hands of wandering Homer may have groped
In his old blindness, while his eloquent lips
Smiled gravely saturnine, as sad high thoughts
Lightened across the hill-tops of his soul.
The lyre of Hermes may have rung to thee,
Before Dodona's leaves shook prophecies
On slumbering votaries ; ere the white shafts rose
Fluted on Delphi or Athenian streets
Had heard the voice of Socrates, nor yet
Was there a Calvary in all the world.

IV.

The beacon-fire from Pharos shines to guide
The beaked triremes with Sidon's wares
And wine from Chios, and the Samian earth
Transformed to gold by potters' artful hands :
A while it shines, and then the ships and wares
Are changed : anon the stars are left again
The only watchers. Temples and their shrines,
Before the Faith that brooks no rivals, fall,
And from the strife the conquering Christian shouts
Against the demons ; and the cenobite
Hurries half naked by,
Smiting thee with his crutch and palsied hand.
In the far Thebaid's hermit-warren, weave
Thy straws, blest cenobite ! for thou hast seen
Bread brought to thee by ravens from heaven's board,—

Souls carried upwards upon angels' wings ;
And, like the red edge of averted thunder,
Thou hast seen all the demons fall sheer down.
Heaven waits for thee ; thy life throbs up in prayer,
Shedding joy-tears into the passion-cup ;
For these old wickednesses passed away—
Alas ! and he too has now passed the same—
And through the deepening sand about thy flanks
Even thou, before the face of Heaven,
Appealest for like burial with thy kin.

v.

Crossing the dusky stream
On the chance stepping-stones of time,
Descending the uneven stairs of myths
Into our nature's cavern-gloom,
Nigh breathless we become,
As if the blood fell backward in the veins ;
And when we turn again
Into the even sunlight of to-day,
The interests of the present seem no more
Than fool's play, wind in trees, an even-song ;
And all our dear wise generation shrinks
Into small grasshoppers, or clamouring storks
That build frail nests on roofs of kingless towns,
Uncertain as storm-scattered clouds, or leaves
Heaped up as day shrinks coldly in.
Yet art thou not, O Sphinx !
The mere child's bauble that the man disowns
With loftier knowledge, weightier cares ?
Ah, no : for evermore
The question comes again
Which nature cannot answer, but which thou,
Watcher by temple doors,

Thou mightest have solved to entering worshippers
Making them turn away,
Earthward, not starward, searching for their home,
Inward and not down beyond the tomb,
Nor over Styx for fairer days than ours ;
For night is certain on the further shore.
Watch then, O Sphinx ! watch on
Before the temple doors of all the gods.

II.—THE WITCH'S BALLAD.

O, I hae come from far away,
From a warm land far away,
A southern land across the sea,
With sailor-lads about the mast,
Merry and canny, and kind to me.

And I hae been to yon town
To try my luck in yon town ;
Nort, and Mysie, Elspie too.
Right braw we were to pass the gate,
Wi' gowden clasps on girdles blue.

Mysie smiled wi' miminy mouth,
Innocent mouth, miminy mouth ;
Elspie wore a scarlet gown,
Nort's grey eyes were unco' gleg.
My Castile comb was like a crown.

We walked abreast all up the street,
Into the market up the street ;
Our hair with marigolds was wound,
Our bodices with love-knots laced,
Our merchandise with tansy bound.

Nort had chickens, I had cocks,
 Gamesome cocks, loud-crowing cocks;
Mysie ducks, and Elspie drakes,—
For a wee groat or a pound;
We lost nae time wi' gives and takes.

Lost nae time, for well we knew,
 In our sleeves full well we knew
When the gloaming came that night,
Duck nor drake, nor hen nor cock
Would be found by candle-light.

And when our chaffering all was done,
 All was paid for, sold and done,
We drew a glove on ilka hand,
We sweetly curtsied each to each,
And deftly danced a saraband.

The market-lassies looked and laughed
 Left their gear, and looked and laughed;
They made as they would join the game,
But soon their mithers, wild and wud,
With whack and screech they stopped the same.

Sae loud the tongues o' randies grew,
 The flytin' and the skirlin' grew,
At all the windows in the place,
Wi' spoons or knives, wi' needle or awl,
Was thrust out every hand and face.

And down each stair they thronged anon,
 Gentle, semple, thronged anon;
Souter and tailor, frowsy Nan,
The ancient widow young again,
Simpering behind her fan.

Without a choice, against their will,
Doited, dazed, against their will,
The market lassie and her mither,
The farmer and his husbandman,
Hand in hand dance a' thegither.

Slow at first, but faster soon,
Still increasing, wild and fast,
Hoods and mantles, hats and hose,
Blindly doffed and cast away,
Left them naked, heads and toes.

They would have torn us limb from limb,
Dainty limb from dainty limb ;
But never one of them could win
Across the line that I had drawn
With bleeding thumb a-widdershin.

But there was Jeff the provost's son,
Jeff the provost's only son ;
There was Father Auld himsel',
The Lombard frae the hostelry,
And the lawyer Peter Fell.

All goodly men we singled out,
Waled them well, and singled out,
And drew them by the left hand in ;
Mysie the priest, and Elspie won
The Lombard, Nort the lawyer carle,
I mysel' the provost's son.

Then, with cantrip kisses seven,
Three times round with kisses seven
Warped and woven there spun we
Arms and legs and flaming hair,
Like a whirlwind on the sea.

Like a wind that sucks the sea,
Over and in and on the sea,
Good sooth it was a mad delight ;
And every man of all the four
Shut his eyes and laughed outright.
Laughed as long as they had breath,
Laughed while they had sense or breath ;
And close about us coiled a mist
Of gnats and midges, wasps and flies,
Like the whirlwind shaft it rist.
Drawn up I was right off my feet ;
Into the mist and off my feet ;
And, dancing on each chimney-top,
I saw a thousand darling imps
Keeping time with skip and hop.
And on the provost's brave ridge-tile,
On the provost's grand ridge-tile,
The Blackamoor first to master me
I saw, I saw that winsome smile,
The mouth that did my heart beguile,
And spoke the great Word over me,
In the land beyond the sea.
I called his name, I called aloud,
Alas ! I called on him aloud ;
And then he filled his hand with stour,
And threw it towards me in the air ;
My mouse flew out, I lost my pow'r !
My lusty strength, my power were gone ;
Power was gone, and all was gone.
He will not let me love him more !
Of bell and whip and horse's tail
He cares not if I find a store.

But I am proud if he is fierce !

I am as proud as he is fierce ;
I'll turn about and backward go,
If I meet again that Blackamoor,
And he'll help us then, for he shall know
I seek another paramour.

And we'll gang once more to yon town,
Wi' better luck to yon town ;
We'll walk in silk and cramoisie,
And I shall wed the provost's son ;
My lady of the town I'll be !

For I was born a crowned king's child,
Born and nursed a king's child,
King o' a land ayont the sea,
Where the Blackamoor kissed me first,
And taught me art and glamourie.

Each one in her wame shall hide
Her hairy mouse, her wary mouse,
Fed on madwort and agramie,—
Wear amber beads between her breasts,
And blind-worm's skin about her knee.

The Lombard shall be Elspie's man,
Elspie's gowden husband-man ;
Nort shall take the lawyer's hand ;
The priest shall swear another vow
We'll dance again the saraband !

III.—LOVE'S CALENDAR.

THAT gusty spring, each afternoon
By the ivied cot I passed,
And noted on that lattice soon
Her fair face downward cast ;
Still in the same place seated there,
So diligent, so very fair.

Oft-times I said I knew her not,
Yet that way round would go,
Until, when evenings lengthened out,
And bloomed the may-hedge row,
I met her by the wayside well,
Whose waters, maybe, broke the spell.

For, leaning on her pail, she prayed
I'd lift it to her head.
So did I ; but I'm much afraid
Some wasteful drops were shed,
And that we blushed, as face to face
Needs must we stand the shortest space.

Then when the sunset mellowed through
The ears of rustling grain,
When lattices wide open flew,
When oak-leaves fell like rain,
As well as I she knew the hour
At morn or eve I neared her bower.

And now that snow o'erlays the thatch,
Each starlit eve within
The door she waits ; I raise the latch,
And kiss her lifted chin ;
Nor do I think we've blushed again,
For Love hath made but one of twain.

IV.—OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE.

(x.)

CONTENTMENT IN THE DARK.

WE ask not to be born : 'tis not by will
That we are here beneath the battle-smoke,
Without escape ; by good things as by ill,
By facts and mysteries enchain'd : no cloak
Of an Elijah, no stars whereupon
Angels ascending and descending shine
Over the head here pillowed on a stone,
Anywhere found ;—so say they who repine.
But each year hath its harvest, every hour
Some melody, child-laughter, strengthening strife,
For mother Earth still gives her child his dower,
And loves like doves sit on the boughs of life.

Ought we to have whate'er we want, in sooth ?
To build heaven-reaching towers, find Jacob's stair ;
Alchemists' treasures, everlasting youth,
Or aught that may not stand our piercing air ?
Nay, even these are ours, but only found
By Poet in these fabulous vales, due cast,
Where grows the amaranth in charmèd ground ;
And he it was thenceforth became the Priest,
And raised Jove's altar when the world was young :
He too it was, in Prophet's vesture stoled,
Spake not but sang until life's roof-tree rung,
And we who hear him still are crown'd with gold.

(XI.)

THE UNIVERSE VOID.

REVOLVING worlds, revolving systems, yea,
Revolving firmaments, nor there we end :
Systems of firmaments revolving, send
Our thought across the Infinite astray,
Gasping and lost and terrified, the day
Of life, the goodly interests of home,
Shrivelled to nothing ; that unbounded dome
Peeling still on, in blind fatality.
No rest is there for our souls' wingèd feet,
She must return for shelter to her ark—
The body, fair, frail, death-born, incomplete :
And let her bring this truth back from the dark ;
Life is self-centred, man is nature's god ;
Space, time, are but the walls of his abode.

V.—THE OLD SCOTCH HOUSE.

(IV.)

BELOW THE OLD HOUSE.

BENEATH those buttressed walls with lichens grey,
Beneath the slopes of trees whose flickering shade
Darkens the pools by dun green velveted,
The stream leaps like a living thing at play,—
In haste it seems ; it cannot, cannot stay !
The great boughs changing there from year to year,
And the high jackdaw-haunted eaves, still hear
The burden of the rivulet—Passing away !
And some time certainly that oak no more
Will keep the winds in check ; his breadth of beam
Will go to rib some ship for some far shore ;
Those coigns and eaves will crumble, while that stream
Will still run whispering, whispering night and day,
That over-song of father Time,—Passing away !

A POET'S HARVEST HOME.

1882.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

I.—GLENKINDIE.

*About Glenkindie and his man,
A false ballant hath long been writ ;
Some bootless loon had written it,
 Upon a bootless plan :
 But I have found the true at last,
And here it is, so hold it fast
'Twas made by a kind damozel
Who loved him and his men right well.*

GLENKINDIE, best of harpers, came
Unbidden to our town,
And he was sad and sad to see,
For love had worn him down.

It was the love, as all men know,
The love that brought him down,
The hopeless love for the king's daughter,
The dove that heired a crown.

Now he wore not that collar of gold,
His dress was forest green,
His wondrous fair and rich mantel
Had lost its silvery sheen.

But still by his side walked Rafe, his boy,
In goodly cramoisie,
Of all the boys that ever I saw,
The goodliest boy was he.

Oh, Rafe the page, oh, Rafe the page,
Ye stole the heart frae me,
Oh, Rafe the page, oh, Rafe the page,
I wonder where ye be ;

We ne'er may see Glenkindie more,
But may we never see thee ?

Glenkindie came within the hall,
We set him on the dais,
And gave him bread, and gave him wine,
The best in all the place.

We set for him the guest's high chair,
And spread the naperie,
Our Dame herself would serve for him,
And I for Rafe, perdie !

But down he sat on a low, low stool,
And thrust his long legs out,
And leant his back to the high chair,
And turned his harp about.

He turned it round, he stroked the strings,
He touched each tirling-pin,
He put his mouth to the sounding-board
And breathed his breath therein.

And Rafe sat over against his face,
And looked at him wistfullie,
I almost grat ere he began,
They were so sad to see.

The very first stroke he strack that day
We all came crowding near,
And the second stroke he strack that day
We all were smit with fear.

The third stroke that he strack that day
Full fain we were to cry,
The fourth stroke that he strack that day
We thought that we would die.

No tongue can tell how sweet it was,
How far and yet so near,
We saw the saints in Paradise,
And bairnies on their Lier.

And our sweet Dame saw her good lord
She told me privilie—
She saw him as she saw him last,
On his ship upon the sea.

Anon he laid his little harp by,
He shut his wondrous eyes,
We stood a long time like dumb things,
Stood in a dumb surprise.

Then all at once we left that trance,
And shouted where we stood,
We clasped each other's hands and vowed
We would be wise and good.

Soon he rose up and Rafe rose too,
He drank wine and broke bread,
He clasped hands with our trembling Dame,
But never a word he said.

They went, alack and lack-a-day,
They went the way they came.

I followed them all down the floor,
And oh but I had drouth,
To touch his cheek, to touch his hand,
To kiss Rafe's velvet mouth.

But I knew such was not for me ;
They went straight from the door ;
We saw them fade within the mist,
And never saw them more.

II.—THE OLD, OLD STORY.

I.

IT seems but yesterday, and yet
I was then but two years from school
This picture I can not forget,
Over all life's seething pool.
The sweet light voice, a living lute,
The sweet slim figure struck me mute ;
Matilda was the lovely name,
Within a neat red-pencilled frame
I wrote it in my first verse book,
Snugly kept in secret nook !
She came to us beneath the wing
Of her mamma, whose bonnet wide
Was an epitome of spring,—
So long since, I must even confide,
The great scooped bonnet was just then
Adored by fashion and by men :
Well I remember wondering
How this frank angel ever came
From such a broad-winged pompous dame !
And after forty years depart,
Child and mamma drop on us here ;
Can the slim figure and light heart
Beneath the same broad wing appear
Again in this far distant year ?
Ah no ! the ladies seem the same,
But the bonnet is quite different ;
Matilda is the pompous dame,
And this her daughter Millicent !
Good heavens ! it is indeed just so :
Time reproduces all his toys ;
Here is the pair of long ago
Touching the hearts of other boys.

And am I then to moralise,
With satire in my rhymes and eyes ?
The sonsy matron ! suppose we
Ask *her* now what she thinks of *me* ?

II.

I would indeed like well to see
What Matilda thinks, or thought of me
In that romantic early year
When her fine name I held so dear,
Or at least made it so appear
In my long-hid first verses' book :
I'll try to wile her out to look
At the sundial or the bees,
And underneath the quivering trees
I shall touch on ancient things,
That so long since lost all their wings,
Or rather, to tell truth, I'd say,
Used them long since to fly away.
I did at once, and I must own
A faintly sentimental tone
Stole o'er my reminiscences,
As we passed, repassed the bees :
I said her child recalled her so,—
Revived in me the long ago—
The age was just about the same
When we once played a charming game
Now quite gone out, upon the grass ;
And here again the bees we pass ;
Though she forgets to turn her head,
But answers in a cheerful mood,
Her daughter is both fair and good.
The gravel crunched beneath her tread
While she went on, and thus she said :

' Your memory's good for long ago,
I often wish that mine were so,
But when a girl is wed like me,
And carried quite away to town,
The rest soon fades away, you see
The birds gone, soon the nest blows down :
Your brother James, now gone, and I
Had some flirtations certainly,
He was the red-haired one, and tall :—
I can't remember you at all !'

I made reply, some sidelong mutter ;
We turned, we joined the rest at tea,
She ate three folds of bread and butter,
She had *never* thought at all of me !

III.—BIRTHDAY, *ÆT.* 70.

SO many years I've gone this way,
So many years ! I must confess
Waste energies, much disarray,
Yet can I own no weariness,
Nor see I evening's shadows fall
Down my much inscribed wall :
The warm air still is like mid-day,
And many mournful ghosts are past,
Laid still at last.

The fabled fardel lighter grew
As near the bourne the bearer drew :
Life can alas no more surprise
By its continuous compromise.
New faces fill the chairs, and so
Our interest in the game runs low.
Quiet pleasures longest stay,
Experience packs so much away.

I wait and wonder : long ago
This wonder was my constant guest,
Wonder at our environing,
And at myself within the ring :
Still that abides with me, some quest
Before my footsteps seems to lie,
But quest of what I scarcely know,
Life itself makes no reply :
A quest for naught that earth supplies,
This is our life's last compromise.

So many years I've gone this way
It seems I may walk on for aye,
'Long life God's gift' a brother prayed,
Close on the confines of the dead,
Going reluctant, not afraid :
With bated breath I bow the head
Thinking of those grave words to-day.

The ancient tempter well divined
The longing of the sunlit blind,
"Ye shall be wise as gods," he said :
And never may this be, but still,
In hope we climb the topless hill.
It is the ending of the strife
Calms and crowns the weary head,
Not till the morn beyond our life
Can the oracle be read,
When the unanswered brain and heart
Hath ceased to ask and ceased to smart :
And all the centuries to come,
Like centuries past shall still be dumb.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

I.—ASSISTANCE DELAYED.

HAD that hand hailed me and that cheerful song,
Had that good chance befallen me, while the blood
Was juvenescent and the vista long,
And life's mid-year unbridged : while yet all-good
Appeared the triumphs to be won, the men
Who *had* attained, all gods, amidst the mist
Blood-red o'er youth's long sunrise. Doubtless then
Proudly had I leapt forth, and dared the best,
Either with tricks fantastic, or high faith
And art,—the best that in this right arm lay !
But now the game seems boys' play : keep your breath
To cool your pottage, wise old proverbs say.
The world still grudgingly unties her store :
Fame and reward are ours when they are prized no more.

II.—A GARLAND FOR ADVANCING YEARS.

WEAR thou this fresh green garland this one day
This white-flowered garland wear for Love's delight,
While still the sun shines, ere the lessening light
Declines into the shadows cold and grey :
Wear thou this myrtle leaf while yet ye may.
Love's wings are wings that hate the dews of night ;
Nor will he rest still smiling in our sight,
And still companioning our western way.

Wear thou this plain green garland this one day
To please Love's eyes, else not for all the might
Of all the gods, nor any law of right
Will he, content with age's disarray,
For us pass by the youthful and the gay ;
And it were hard to live in love's despite.

William James Linton.

1812

WILLIAM JAMES LINTON, the most distinguished living master of the art of wood-engraving, was born in London in 1812. Having served an apprenticeship to wood-engraving with Bonner (1828-34), he worked for a year with Powis; for another year or more with John Thompson, and between 1836 and 1842 with John Orrin Smith.

A radical of the radicals Mr. Linton took a prominent part in the agitation for the establishment of a Free Press. In 1839 he was proprietor of the *National*, a paper intended to serve as a sort of cheap library for the people, to consist mainly of selected extracts from such prohibited works as were beyond the purchasing-reach, or time for study of working men. "After the *National* had run its brief course he became editor of the *Illuminated Magazine*. Among his friends he numbered Mazzini, Worcell (the Polish martyr), Herzen, and Lamennais. He was one of those whose letters to Mazzini were opened at the Post office in 1844, by order of Sir James Graham. In 1848 he went to Paris to present a congratulatory address from the London Working Men's Association to the French Republicans. With George Henry Lewes and Thornton Hunt he founded in 1849 the *Leader*, a London weekly newspaper advocating republican principles. He

soon withdrew from the *Leader* and started the *English Republic*, a monthly magazine first printed at Leeds. At this time (1851) he was living in the lake country, at Brantwood (the house subsequently occupied by Mr. Ruskin). Thinking it advisable to have the magazine printed under his personal superintendence, he procured a printing press and got men to work for him at his own house.

In 1852 Mr. Linton published anonymously at Newcastle-on-Tyne "The Plaint of Freedom," a poem or series of poems, in the metre of "In Memoriam." A copy was sent to Walter Savage Landor, who, in "Dry Sticks Fagoted," addressed the following verses to the nameless donor:—

"TO THE AUTHOR OF 'THE PLAINT OF
FREEDOM.'

' Praiser of Milton ! worthy of his praise !
How shall I name thee ? Art thou yet unnamed ?
While verses flourish hanging overhead
In looser tendrils than stern husbandry
May well approve, on thee shall none descend ?
At Milton's hallowed name thy hymn august
Sounds as the largest bell from minster-tower.
I ponder ; and in time may dare to praise.
Milton had done it ; Milton would have graspt
Thy hand amid his darkness, and with more
Impatient pertinacity because
He heard the voice and could not see the face."

Mr. Linton's second book of verse, "Claribel, and other Poems," appeared in 1865, with a dedication to Mr. William Bell Scott. "Claribel," a dramatic poem in two acts, was founded on a prose story by Mr. Linton's friend, Charles Wells, author of "Joseph and His Brethren." Among the more noticable poems are, "Grenville's Last Fight" (first published

in *Household Words*, in 1852), an unadorned but impressive narrative, in blank verse, of the glorious exploit which Tennyson celebrated many years afterwards in his ballad of "The Revenge"; "Harry Marten's Dungeon Thoughts"; "Eurydice," a fervid and passionate lament; and "Iphigenia at Aulis," which seems to have been inspired by Landor's "Hellenics." The little book is illustrated with charming woodcuts.

About 1867 Mr. Linton went to America, taking up his residence at Appledore, a farm-house in the township of Hamden, just outside New Haven, Connecticut, on the old road to Boston. For some years he sent his blocks to New York (seventy-four miles away) to be printed; but at length, to save time and trouble, he bought a press. Having got the press, he borrowed some type of a friend, and amused himself with printing "Wind-Falls," 16mo, a collection of some two hundred extracts from "various dramas,"—dramas that are not to be found in the library of the British Museum. In 1879 he wrote and printed a Memoir of his old Chartist friend, James Watson, who died in 1874. Only fifty copies were struck off, but in 1880 the Memoir was reprinted at Manchester (in a negligent manner) for general circulation. The next book issued from the Appledore Press was a small collection of Mr. Linton's translations from Béranger and Victor Hugo. It was followed by "Golden Apples of Hesperus: Poems not in the Collections," 8vo, a delightful anthology, with a beautiful frontispiece, and a hundred ornamental headings and vignettes. Two hundred and twenty-five copies were issued; and it is needless to say that the volume is dearly prized

by bibliophiles. But the rarest of the books printed at the Appledore Press is "In Dispraise of a Woman : Catullus with Variations," 1886, 8vo, of which only twenty-five copies were struck off. Dissatisfied with Sir Philip Sidney's rendering of Catullus' epigram, "Nulli se dicit mulier mea nubere malle," etc., Mr. Linton determined to try his hand. He finally succeeded in giving thirty-two different renderings in English verse. Here are three :—

"With none, that woman tells me, would she wed
Except with me : No ! not with Jove himself.
Believe her ? take a summer wind to bed ;
Or keep your running water on a shelf."

" 'Were Jove himself to seek me for his bride
I should prefer thee ! ' that is what she says.
O Wind and Water, I am satisfied :
I know so little of a woman's ways."

"Sweet to be told that I am loved the best,
Sweet in a pleasant haven to abide :
But winds must veer, and water hateth rest,
And Venus is but sea-foam deified."

In 1887 appeared "Love-Lore," a batch of a hundred short lyrical poems ; the impression limited to fifty copies (Appledore Press, 16mo). Some of the poems are playful and whimsical, others pensive and tender ; but all are free and unconstrained. The collection consists entirely of the poet's latest work, but Mr. Linton is one of those who never grow old. His notes are sweeter and clearer to-day than they were fifty years ago. He has closely studied the Elizabethan poets, and in "Love-Lore" the traces of this study are clearly noticeable. Noticeable, too, is the influence of Landor. It is not surprising that Mr. Linton's imitative faculty has been quickened ; for he is a wood-engraver first and a poet afterwards.

Nearly all the poems in "Love-Lore," together with many selected from the "Claribel" volume, are included in "Poems and Translations" (London: J. C. Nimmo. 1889).

Very different from "Love-Lore," is "Famine: A Masque" (Appledore Press), with a frontispiece borrowed from William Blake; a passionate denunciation of the evils of plutocracy.

As a translator Mr. Linton has few equals. His renderings in the original metres of old and modern French poems are always faithful and spirited. Béranger's "Voyage au Pays de Cocagne," a poem that might be thought to defy translation, is rendered most dexterously; and in venturing to grapple with Victor Hugo's "Le Chasseur Noir" he has been far more successful than could have been anticipated. To Charles d'Orléans he has done full justice; nor have Clément Marot and Ronsard any cause to complain. But the translations from Béranger (particularly the rendering of "Rosette") are, perhaps, the most attractive.

In the summer of 1890, Mr Linton issued the *magnum opus* on which he has been so long engaged, "The Masters of Wood-Engraving," folio, the sole authoritative treatise on that art. He spent 1883 and part of 1884 in London, writing in the Print Room of the British Museum. The Trustees allowed him to take photographs of choice engravings; and he had some two hundred photographs taken, of the same size as the originals. Returning with his notes and photographs to New Haven, he began to write his book. When the scheme and plan of his work had been arranged, when the whole book was ready in rough MS., and a great portion had been fairly

written, he began printing. He had a press, three sets of photographs, paper enough for three copies, and type enough for three pages, short royal folio. So he set three pages; worked off pages 2 and 3, distributed them, and then set up page 4 to complete the sheet, with page 1 for the other side of the sheet. The composition and printing of the 229 folio pages was the work of his own hands. Add to this that he mounted all the photographs himself, in two out of the three copies. For more than two years he was hard at work—writing, printing, and mounting photographs. He brought one of the three copies to London in 1887; and Messrs. Dawson of Chiswick proceeded to reproduce the illustrations under his personal superintendence. At length, in the summer of 1890, “The Masters of Wood-Engraving” was delivered to subscribers by the excellent printers, Messrs. Whittingham; and Mr. Linton went back to America. It is to be hoped that now he will find time to print at the Appledore Press more of his scattered poems. His reminiscences, if he could be induced to write them, would be of rare interest.

A. H. BULLEN.

LYRICS.

WILLIAM JAMES LINTON.

I.—EPICUREAN.

IN Childhood's unsuspecting hours
The fairies crown'd my head with flowers.

Youth came : I lay at Beauty's feet ;
She smiled and said my song was sweet.

Then Age : and, Love no longer mine,
My brows I shaded with the vine.

With flowers and love and wine and song,
O Death ! life hath not been too long.

II.—TO HIS LOVE

(WHO HAD UNJUSTLY REBUKED HIM).

GENTLE as Truth, and zealous even as Love—
Which is the fiercest of all earthly things ;
Frank, and yet using caution as a glove

To guard the skin from foulnesses or stings,—
Giving the bare hand surely to the true :
Such would I be, to make me worthy you.

Bitter sometimes, as wholesome tonics are ;

Wrathful as Justice in her earnest mood ;
Scornful as Honour is, yet not to bar

Appreciation of the lowest good ;
Loathing the vile, the cruel, the untrue :
How should my manhood else be worthy you ?

Say I am subtil, fierce, and bitter-tongued :

Love is all this, and yet Love is beloved.
But say not that I wilfully have wrong'd

Even those whose hate and falsehood I have proved.
Who say this know me not, and never knew
What I would be, but to be worthy you.

III.—ROSY WINE.

MY Mistress' frowns are hard to bear,
And yet I will not quite despair ;
Nor think, because her lips I leave,
There's nothing for me but to grieve.
—The goblet's lip awaiteth mine :
My grief I quench in rosy wine.

Dame Fortune too has faithless gone :
But let her go ! I will not moan.
Draw in your chair, old Friend ! and see
What rating Fortune has for me.
Clink yet again your glass with mine,—
To Fortune's health, in rosy wine !

Pass, Fortune ! pass, thou fickle jade !
One fortunately constant maid
Smiles on me yet ; though loves depart,
Her presence gladdeneth my heart.
Thy tendrils cling, O loving Vine !
My griefs I quench in rosy wine.

IV.—LOVE JEALOUS.

TIME was methought 'twould be enough for love
To live by Her, to worship and admire :
Poor silly moth ! that all too soon must prove
The kindling of Love's ire,
And play with fire,
And drawing nearer, nearer, so be burn'd,—
Unknowing that I yearn'd.

I look'd as One might on a painting look,
Or on a statue fair but marble-cold ;
I sought not, I admired : Love may not brook
A love needs not be told.

Now would I fold
The picture, the warm statue, to my heart :
Now hath Desire his part.

Once seem'd it much but listening to Her,
Hearing her voice, whose music was so clear
It was all pleasure ; now I feel the stir
Of pain while She is near,
Lest others hear.
She must be mine, all mine, my very own :
So Love at last is known.

V.—A DREAM.

I DREAM'D (ah me ! but life is dream-like all !)
I lay in a garden fair,
Sweet-shaded there
By a young peach-tree ; and the tree let fall
Its blossoms of rich scent
On me,—for what that meant.
Then question'd I my thought to find what sense
My dream interpreted ;
The answer said
“ The bloom o' the peach betokens preference.”
O heart ! if it be true
My Lady cares for you.

VI.—FAINT HEART.

FAINT heart wins not lady fair :
Victory smiles on those who dare.
There is but one way to woo :
Think thy Mistress willing too ;
Leave her never chance to choose,
Hold her powerless to refuse !

If she answer thee with No,
Wilt thou bow and let her go ?
When, most like, her No is meant
But to make more sweet consent :
So thy suit may longer be,
For so much she liketh thee.

Never heed her pretty airs !
He's no lover who despairs ;
He's no warrior whom a frown
Drives from his beleaguer'd town ;
And no hunter he who stops
Till his stricken quarry drops.

Aim as certain not to miss ;
Take her as thou wouldst a kiss !
Or ask once, and if in vain,
Ask her twice, and thrice again :
Sure of this when all is said,—
They lose most who are afraid.

VII.—BARE FEET.

O FAIR white feet ! O dawn-white feet
Of Her my hope may claim !
Bare-footed through the dew she came,
Her Love to meet.

Star-glancing feet, the windflowers sweet
Might envy, without shame,
As through the grass they lightly came,
Her Love to meet.

O Maiden sweet, with flower-kiss'd feet !
My heart your footstool name !
Bare-footed through the dew she came,
Her Love to meet.

VIII.—LOVE'S BLINDNESS.

THEY call her fair. I do not know :
I never thought to look.
Who heeds the binder's costliest show
When he may read the book ?

What need a list of parts to me
When I possess the whole ?
Who only watch her eyes to see
The colour of her soul.

I may not praise her mouth, her chin,
Her feet, her hands, her arms :
My love lacks leisure to begin
The schedule of her charms.

To praise is only to compare :
And therefore Love is blind.
I loved before I was aware
Her beauty was of kind.

IX.—HAPPENING.

LAST evening, carrying home my gift
Of fresh wild fruit in cool leaf laid,
I met the little neighbour maid ;
And my ripe offering went adrift.

I hear of others. So they take—
These fair young thieves, the dues of Eld.
How may such larcenies be quell'd ?
Tell me, some Matron ! for love's sake.

X.—SPRING AND AUTUMN.

“**T**HOU wilt forget me.” “Love has no such word.”
The soft Spring wind is whispering to the trees,
Among lime-blossoms have the hovering bees
Those whispers heard?

“Or thou wilt change.” “Love changeth not:” he said.
The purple heather cloy the air with scent
Of honey. O’er the moors her lover went,
Nor turn’d his head.

XI.—TOO LATE.

YES! thou art fair, and I had loved
If we in earlier hours had met;
But ere tow’rd me thy beauty moved
The sun of Love’s brief day had set.

Though I may watch thy opening bloom,
And its rich promise gladly see,
’Twill not procrastinate my doom:
The ripen’d fruit is not for me.

Yet, had I shared thy course of years,
And young as Hope beheld thy charms,
The love that only now endears
Perchance had given thee to my arms.

Vain, vain regret! Another day
Will kiss the buds of younger flowers,
But ne’er will evening turn away
From love untimelier than ours.

XII.—MADAM! NO!

MADAM, no! And leave thy wiles :
 Though I own thee fair,
 I in truth mistrust the smiles
 That any fool may share.

I must quit, despite thy charms
 (Truly they are rare),
 But those all-embracing arms
 Can not detain me there.

Madam, no! my heart may yearn ;
 Love indeed could wait—
 Cared I but to take my turn
 With those who crowd thy gate.

XIII.—THE LAW OF CHANGE.

THEY know not Love who love to range :
 As who would sip from wine to wine
 Loses all taste in his exchange,
 And sups at length with Circe's swine.

Love's self comprised the world at first ;
 But, grown monotonous, Desire
 (With itch of restlessness accurst)
 Began the outer world to admire.

Might I but Cleopatra know—
 Whose varied charms no use could stale :
 So, sounding love from high to low,
 From low to high, complete the scale.

Yet, Helen ! I would meet thy smiles,
And clasp Aspasia to my heart ;
Then Sappho's frenzy, Lais' wiles,
Experience, proving every part.

Fool ! Change itself content debars :
In seeking all thou hast not One.
Who shuts out light, to see the stars,
May see them, but has lost the sun.

XIV.—THE SILENCED SINGER.

THE nest is built, the song hath ceased :
The minstrel joineth in the feast,
So singeth not. The poet's verse,
Crippled by Hymen's household curse,
Follows no more its hungry quest.
Well if Love's feathers line the nest.

Yet blame not that beside the fire
Love hangeth up his unstrung lyre !
How sing of hope when Hope hath fled,
Joy whispering lip to lip instead ?
Or how repeat the tuneful moan
When the Obdurate's all my own ?

Love, like the lark, while soaring sings :
Wouldst have him spread again his wings ?
What careth he for higher skies
Who on the heart of harvest lies,
And finds both sun and firmament
Closed in the round of his content ?

XV.—SWEET GALE.

THE sweet South Wind once underground was
frozen,
And only growth to save her could avail.
She grew up through a plant; the plant so chosen
We call in our North Country the Sweet Gale.

XVI.—THE ADVENT OF PEACE.

OVER the red field strode an armed knight :
Men knew him not; but when the fray did
cease,
God's Angel stoop'd to bless Victorious Right,
And bade the hero's name thenceforth be Peace.

XVII.—SEASONS.

BLUE flowers twined in the golden hair,
Bright in the sun and the fresh Spring air,
Childhood's laugh with the promise there.

Climbing the apple boughs among,
Shaking the fruit down,—with a song :
Youth ! such pleasures to thee belong.

Rich are the colours on falling leaves,
Rich is the splendour of crimson eves
Or the gold of Autumn's gather'd sheaves.

Stooping over the written page,
White as the snow and wise as Age :—
Which is it—history or presage ?

XVIII.—EPILOGUE.

IN the days when Earth was young
Beauty had not found a tongue :
For the Gods forbade her speech,
Lest her voice too soon should teach
All the joy that Love bestows,
All the lore that heaven knows.

Through the bleak world wandering,
Silent Beauty yet could bring
Unto many an anxious thought
Dreams of heaven, else untaught ;
Everywhere that she might come
She of heaven spoke, though dumb.

Waited all the Gods the event,—
Love alone impatient :
Unto Beauty then he led,
Blushing as he whispered,
One who kiss'd her. So her tongue
Was freed ; and the first poet's song.

TRANSLATIONS.

WILLIAM JAMES LINTON.

I,—ROSETTE.

(BÉRANGER.)

(Sans respect pour votre printemps.)

WHAT! can you so respectless be
Of your life's spring to talk, in sooth,
Of tenderness and love to me
Whose forty years o'erweight my youth?
Then had my heart a ready vow
For even the lowliest grisette:
Ah! if I could but love you now
As in those days I loved Rosette!

Your splendid carriage may display
Your rich adornments,—well they suit
Rosette, but neat and fresh and gay,
Tripp'd lightly, jauntily, on foot.
Her eyes, despite my jealous brow,
Provoked replies from all we met
Ah! if I could but love you now
As in those days I loved Rosette!

In this boudoir, so satin-soft,
Your smiles are mirror-multiplied
Rosette one glass had, wherein oft
One of the Graces I espied.
No curtains shadow'd o'er her brow,
The dawn her merry glances met:
Ah! if I could but love you now
As in those days I loved Rosette

Your gifted mind, so brightly shown,
The poet chorus well may lead :
I do not blush the while I own
Rosette knew hardly how to read.
She had no words to tell me how
She loved,—love told her meaning yet :
Ah ! if I could but love you now
As in those days I loved Rosette !

Than yours indeed her charms were less,
Even her heart less loving seem'd,
Nor had her eyes your passionateness
When they upon her lover beam'd.
But then she had, I must allow,
My youth, which I so much regret :
Ah ! that I cannot love you now
As in those days I loved Rosette !

II.—THE TOMB AND THE ROSE.

(VICTOR HUGO.)

(*La Tombe dit à la Rose.*)

THE Tomb said to the Rose—
“Of tears the dawn bestows
What makest thou ? lovers' flower !”
The Rose said to the Tomb—
“What makest thou in thy gloom
With what falls there every hour ?”

The Rose said—“Tomb so drear !
Of these flowers I make i' the sere
Perfume of sweetness rare.”
The Tomb said—“Plaintive flower !
Of the souls come in my power
I fashion the angels fair.”

William Edmondstoune Aytoun.

1813—1865.

WILLIAM EDMONDSTOUNE AYTOUN : poet, critic, and translator. His finest poetical work shows clearly how largely he was influenced by the same spirit which influenced Scott—the spirit of romanticism aroused by the study of the old ballads. As a poet his powers were considerable, although most of his poems exhibit the same general characteristics. The undeniable animation of his verse, and his frequent flashes of descriptive power, cause him to be credited with more imaginative fire than in reality he possesses. But none can deny its presence in those fine lines which depict the exploits of the Scottish exiles at the passage of the Rhine (pp. 406-414), or in some of the stanzas (hardly, however, so good) which depict the massacre of Glencoe. Undoubtedly he possessed, also, the enviable faculty, rare even among men of genius, of knowing where his real strength lay. Hence he avoided fruitless waste of literary energy, and did the best work of which he was capable. The chief quality of his poetry is its picturesqueness; it reproduces very vividly one aspect of the Scottish sentiment which belonged to a by-gone age.

Much of Aytoun's best critical work is to be found in the introduction and notes to the "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers" (1848), and in the introduction

and notes to his compilation "The Ballads of Scotland" (1859). His lectures, as a Professor of Literature, were always of value, and showed not only thorough scholarship in the technical sense, but, also, a wide culture. His critical essays in *Blackwood's Magazine* on literary subjects must likewise be named. As a translator he is chiefly remarkable for his share in the "Poems and Ballads of Goethe" translated in conjunction with Mr. (afterwards Sir) Theodore Martin. Many of these renderings are exceedingly happy. With the same collaborator he wrote, in the years following 1840, the celebrated "Bon Gaultier Ballads," which consisted mainly of parodies on well-known poets. Aytoun's versatility is further seen in "Firmilian" (1854), a satirical parody of the group of writers who, imitating the faults rather than the excellences of the author of "Festus," passed into such extravagances of poetical method as to deserve the name given to them by Aytoun of "the spasmodic school." "Firmilian" contained admirable and most clever imitations of Sydney Dobell, Alexander Smith, and others of this school. The infirmity of all parody, as has been well remarked, lies in the fact that the mimicry can never be more than partial, because complete mimicry would be imitation, and in mere imitation there is no humour. Aytoun, however, wished "Firmilian" to be accepted as a serious effort of "the spasmodic school," and himself wrote an article upon it in *Blackwood* treating it as a serious dramatic poem. A curious fact about this article was, that although passages of verse were inserted in it here and there to give *vraisemblance*, it was written and published before "Firmilian"—the poem it purported to review—was

composed. This article deceived some of the critics, and induced them to treat "Firmilian" seriously, but after a while its true character was recognised. This satire may be said to have given the death-blow to spasmodism. It is one of Aytoun's most memorable achievements.

Born in Edinburgh in 1813, Aytoun soon gave token of the qualities which were subsequently to bring him distinction. He was fortunate in the circumstances of childhood. After passing through the Edinburgh Academy and the University course, and spending a time in London law chambers, he resided for some while in Germany. He was called to the Scottish Bar in 1840. Here he was not unsuccessful, although, as might have been expected, his literary proclivities did not assist him in legal circles. When the Chair of Literature in Edinburgh University became vacant in 1845 he applied for and received the appointment. The emoluments were small, but, on the other hand, the duties were comparatively light, and did not necessarily prevent his continuing to practise at the Bar. Moreover Aytoun loved the work, and his peculiar fitness for it was conclusively proved by the rapid increase in the number of students attending his class. For, while in the first year of his professoriate the attendance was only thirty, in the year before his death it was upwards of a hundred and fifty. His temperament enabled him, in an unusual degree, to win the sympathy and respect of younger men. None could question his high abilities, and he performed with equal conscientiousness the more monotonous as well as the more agreeable of his duties. In 1852 he was appointed Sheriff of Orkney, a post which he held

until his death. Aytoun was twice married, his first wife being the youngest daughter of Professor Wilson ("Christopher North"). He died August 4th, 1865.

His first publication, a volume of poems entitled "Poland, Homer, and other Poems," written when he was only seventeen, appeared in 1832. Although, as a critic, he soon became ashamed of it, it yet evinces, according to his friend and biographer Sir Theodore Martin, some of the qualities of his more mature poetical work, together with a "fulness and sweetness of rhythm by no means common in so young a writer." During his residence in Germany he commenced a translation into English verse of Goethe's "Faust." This translation he first thought of publishing in Germany. He abandoned the idea, however, and the translation was never published, for, on his return to England, he found that "no less than three others were either published or announced as in the press." Early in life he commenced his connection with *Blackwood*. To this periodical he was a frequent contributor of prose articles on literary and other topics, and of original poems. He also contributed to it numerous admirable translations from German poets. His "Life and Times of Richard I." appeared in 1840. Between 1840 and 1848 he wrote "The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers," and "Bothwell," a long narrative poem, in 1855-6. His valuable edition of "The Ballads of Scotland" appeared in 1859. To this task he brought great knowledge together with natural aptitude. In it he received much assistance from his mother then in her eighty-seventh year. He also published "Norman Sinclair," a novel, in 1861.

MACKENZIE BELL.

LAYS OF THE SCOTTISH CAVALIERS.

1848.

WILLIAM EDMONDSTOUNE AYTOUN.

I.

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE.

I.

COME hither, Evan Cameron!
Come, stand beside my knee—
I hear the river roaring down
Towards the wintry sea.
There's shouting on the mountain side,
There's war within the blast—
Old faces look upon me,
Old forms go trooping past.
I hear the pibroch wailing
Amidst the din of fight,
And my dim spirit wakes again
Upon the verge of night!

II.

'Twas I that led the Highland host
Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
To battle with Montrose.
I've told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy's shore.
I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsay's pride;
But never have I told thee yet
How the Great Marquis died!

III.

A traitor sold him to his foes ;
O deed of deathless shame !
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
With one of Assynt's name—
Be it upon the mountain's side,
Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or backed by armèd men—
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
Who wronged thy sire's renown ;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down !

IV.

They brought him to the Watergate,
Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart—
The hangman rode below—
They drew his hands behind his back,
And bared his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipped from leash,
They cheered the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout,
And bade him pass along.

V.

It would have made a brave man's heart
Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig west-country lords
In balcony and bow,
There sat their gaunt and withered dames
And their daughters all a-row ;

And every open window
Was full as full might be,
With black-robed Covenanting carles,
That goodly sport to see !

vi.

But when he came, though pale and wan,
He looked so great and high,
So noble was his manly front,
So calm his steadfast eye ;—
The rabble rout forebore to shout,
And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him,
Now turn'd aside and wept.

vii.

But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant laboured,
Till it reach'd the house of doom :
Then first a woman's voice was heard
In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and a hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd :
Then, as the Græme looked upwards,
He met the ugly smile
Of him who sold his King for gold—
The master-fiend Argyle !

viii.

The Marquis gazed a moment,
And nothing did he say,
But the cheek of Argyle grew ghastly pale
And he turned his eyes away.

The painted harlot by his side,
She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
And hands were clenched at him,
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud
"Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared
To look him in the face."

IX.

Had I been there with sword in hand,
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets,
Had pealed the slogan cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailèd men—
Not all the rebels of the south
Had borne us backwards then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

X.

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish Kings were throned
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjured traitors filled the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warristoun
To read the murderous doom,
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

XI.

“ Now by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew’s cross
That waves above us there—
Yea, by a greater, mightier oath—
And oh, that such should be !—
By that dark stream of royal blood
That lies ’twixt you and me—
I have not sought in battle-field
A wreath of such renown,
Nor dared I hope, on my dying day,
To win the martyr’s crown !

XII.

“ There is a chamber far away
Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me
Than by my father’s grave.
For truth and right, ’gainst treason’s might,
This hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower—
Give every town a limb—
And God who made shall gather them :
I go from you to Him ! ”

XIII.

The morning dawned full darkly,
The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
Lit up the gloomy town :
The heavens were thundering out their wrath
The fatal hour was come ;
Yet ever sounded sullenly
The trumpet and the drum.

There was madness on the earth below,
And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
Came forth to see him die.

XIV.

Ah, God ! that ghastly gibbet !
How dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
The ladder and the tree !
Hark ! hark ! it is the clash of arms—
The bells begin to toll—
He is coming ! he is coming !
God's mercy on his soul !
One last long peal of thunder—
The clouds are cleared away,
And the glorious sun once more looks down
Amidst the dazzling day.

XV.

He is coming ! he is coming !
Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walked to battle
More proudly than to die :
There was colour in his visage,
Though all other cheeks were wan,
And they marvelled as they saw him pass
That great and goodly man !

XVI.

He mounted up the scaffold,
And he turned him to the crowd ;
But they dared not trust the people
So he might not speak aloud.

But he looked upon the heavens,
And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
The eye of God shone through :
Yet a black and murky battlement
Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within—
All else was calm and still.

XVII.

The grim Geneva ministers
With anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock
Around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee ;
And veiled his face for Christ's dear grace
Beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose,
And cast his cloak away :
For he had ta'en his latest look
Of earth, and sun, and day.

XVIII.

A beam of light fell o'er him,
Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climbed the lofty ladder
As it were the path to heaven.
Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder roll,
And no man dared to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan ;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done !

II.

THE ISLAND OF THE SCOTS.

I.

THE Rhine is running deep and red,
 The island lies before—
 “Now is there one of all the host
 Will dare to venture o’er ?
 For not alone the river’s sweep
 Might make a brave man quail :
 The foe are on the further side,
 Their shot comes fast as hail.
 God help us, if the middle isle
 We may not hope to win !
 Now, is there any of the host
 Will dare to venture in ?”

II.

“The ford is deep, the banks are steep,
 The island-shore lies wide :
 Nor man nor horse could stem its force,
 Or reach the further side.
 See there ; amidst the willow boughs
 The serried bayonets gleam ;
 They’ve flung their bridge—they’ve won the isle
 The foe have crossed the stream !
 Their volley flashes sharp and strong—
 By all the Saints, I trow,
 There never yet was soldier born
 Could force that passage now !”

III.

So spoke the bold French Mareschal
With him who led the van,
Whilst rough and red before their view
The turbid river ran.
Nor bridge nor boat had they to cross
The wild and swollen Rhine,
And thundering on the other bank
Far stretched the German line.
Hard by there stood a swarthy man
Was leaning on his sword,
And a saddened smile lit up his face
As he heard the Captain's word,
"I've seen a wilder stream ere now
Than that which rushes there ;
I've stemmed a heavier torrent yet
And never thought to dare.
If German steel be sharp and keen,
Is ours not strong and true ?
There may be danger in the deed,
But there is honour too."

IV.

The old lord in his saddle turned,
And hastily he said—
"Hath bold Duguesclin's fiery heart
Awakened from the dead ?
Thou art the leader of the Scots—
Now well and sure I know,
That gentle blood in dangerous hour
Ne'er yet ran cold nor slow,
And I have seen ye in the fight
Do all that mortal may :

If honour is the boon ye seek
It may be won this day.
The prize is in the middle isle,
There lies the venturous way ;
And armies twain are on the plain,
The daring deed to see—
Now ask thy gallant company
If they will follow thee !”

v.

Right gladsome looked the Captain then,
And nothing did he say,
But he turned him to his little band—
Oh few, I ween, were they !
The relics of the bravest force
That ever fought in fray.
No one of all that company
But bore a gentle name,
Not one whose fathers had not stood
In Scotland's fields of fame.
All they had marched with great Dundee
To where he fought and fell,
And in the deadly battle-strife
Had venged their leader well ;
And they had bent the knee to earth
When every eye was dim,
As o'er their hero's buried corpse
They sang the funeral hymn ;
And they had trod the Pass once more,
And stooped on either side
To pluck the heather from the spot
Where he had dropped and died ;
And they had bound it next their hearts,
And ta'en a last farewell

Of Scottish earth and Scottish sky,
Where Scotland's glory fell.
Then went they forth to foreign lands
Like bent and broken men,
Who leave their dearest hope behind,
And may not turn again !

VI.

"The stream," he said, "is broad and deep,
And stubborn is the foe—
Yon island-strength is guarded well—
Say, brothers, will ye go ?
From home and kin for many a year
Our steps have wandered wide,
And never may our bones be laid
Our fathers' graves beside.
No sisters have we to lament,
No wives to wail our fall ;
The traitor's and the spoiler's hand
Have reft our hearths of all.
But we have hearts, and we have arms
As strong to will and dare
As when our ancient banners flew
Within the northern air.
Come, brothers ! let me name a spell
Shall rouse your souls again,
And send the old blood bounding free
Through pulse, and heart, and vein !
Call back the days of bygone years—
Be young and strong once more ;
Think yonder stream, so stark and red,
Is one we've crossed before.
Rise, hill and glen ! rise, crag and wood !
Rise up on either hand—

Again upon the Garry's bank,
On Scottish soil we stand !
Again I see the tartans wave,
Again the trumpets ring ;
Again I hear our leader's call—
‘ Upon them, for the King ! ’
Stayed we behind that glorious day
For roaring flood or linn ?
The soul of Græme is with us still—
Now, brothers ! will ye in ? ”

VII.

No stay—no pause. With one accord
They grasped each others' hand.
And plunged into the angry flood,
That bold and dauntless band.
High flew the spray above their heads,
Yet onward still they bore,
Midst cheer, and shout, and answering yell,
And shot and cannon roar.
“ Now by the Holy Cross ! I swear,
Since earth and sea began
Was never such a daring deed
Essayed by mortal man ! ”

VIII.

Thick blew the smoke across the stream,
And faster flashed the flame :
The water plashed in hissing jets
As ball and bullet came.
Yet onwards pushed the Cavaliers
All stern and undismayed,
With thousand armed foes before,
And none behind to aid.

Once, as they neared the middle stream,
So strong the torrent swept,
That scarce that long and living wall,
Their dangerous footing kept.
Then rose a warning cry behind,
A joyous shout before :
“The current’s strong—the way is long—
They’ll never reach the shore !
See, see ! They stagger in the midst,
They waver in their line !
Fire on the madmen ! break their ranks,
And whelm them in the Rhine ! ”

IX.

Have you seen the tall trees swaying
When the blast is piping shrill,
And the whirlwind reels in fury
Down the gorges of the hill ?
How they toss their mighty branches,
Striving with the tempest’s shock ;
How they keep their place of vantage,
Cleaving firmly to the rock ?
Even so the Scottish warriors
Held their own against the river ;
Though the water flashed around them,
Not an eye was seen to quiver ;
Though the shot flew sharp and deadly,
Not a man relaxed his hold :
For their hearts were big and thrilling
With the mighty thoughts of old.
One word was spoke among them,
And through the ranks it spread—
“Remember our dead Claverhouse ! ”
Was all the Captain said.

Then, sternly bending forward,
They struggled on awhile,
Until they cleared the heavy stream,
Then rushed towards the isle.

X.

The German heart is stout and true,
The German arm is strong;
The German foot goes seldom back
Where armèd foemen throng.
But never had they faced in field
So stern a charge before,
And never had they felt the sweep
Of Scotland's broad claymore.
Not fiercer pours the avalanche
Adown the steep incline
That rises o'er the parent-springs
Of rough and rapid Rhine—
Scarce swifter shoots the bolt from heaven
Than came the Scottish band,
Right up against the guarded trench,
And o'er it, sword in hand.
In vain their leaders forward press—
They meet the deadly brand!
O lonely island of the Rhine,
Where seed was never sown,
What harvest lay upon the sands,
By those strong reapers thrown?
What saw the winter moon that night,
As, struggling through the rain,
She poured a wan and fitful light
On marsh, and stream, and plain?

A dreary spot with corpses strewn,
And bayonets glistening round ;
A broken bridge, a stranded boat,
A bare and battered mound ;
And one huge watchfire's kindled pile,
That sent its quivering glare
To tell the leaders of the host
The conquering Scots were there !

XI.

And did they twine the laurel-wreath
For those who fought so well ?
And did they honour those who lived,
And weep for those who fell ?
What meed of thanks was given to them
Let aged annals tell.
Why should they twine the laurel-wreath—
Why crown the cup with wine ?
It was not Frenchmen's blood that flowed
So freely on the Rhine—
A stranger band of beggared men
Had done the venturous deed :
The glory was to France alone,
The danger was their meed.
And what cared they for idle thanks
From foreign prince and peer ?
What virtue had such honied words
The exiles' hearts to cheer ?
What mattered it that men should vaunt
And loud and fondly swear,
That higher feat of chivalry
Was never wrought elsewhere ?

They bore within their breasts the grief
That fame can never heal—
The deep, unutterable woe
Which none save exiles feel.
Their hearts were yearning for the land
They ne'er might see again—
For Scotland's high and heathered hills,
For mountain, loch, and glen—
For those who haply lay at rest
Beyond the distant sea,
Beneath the green and daisied turf
Where they would gladly be !

XII.

Long years went by. The lonely isle
In Rhine's impetuous flood
Has ta'en another name from those
Who bought it with their blood :
And though the legend does not live,
For legends lightly die,
The peasant, as he sees the stream
In winter rolling by,
And foaming o'er its channel-bed
Between him and the spot
Won by the warriors of the sword,
Still calls that deep and dangerous ford
The Passage of the Scot.

Aubrey de Vere.

1814.

MR. DE VERE has high claims both as a poet and prose writer, but it is not only on this account that his career is interesting. The fact that in an age of ever-increasing strain and mental unrest he has preserved throughout a literary life of almost fifty years the same tranquillity of mood and the same pure and lofty aims with which he started has given him a somewhat special place among the writers of our day. Doubtless this tranquillity of mood has arisen, in some measure, from the influence of his master Wordsworth. For if he has not been, like Wordsworth, "a revealer of things hidden, the interpreter of new and unsuspected relations" with nature, he has been a "sanctifier of things common." His descriptions of nature are generally vivid and always true to fact. His language is simple and unadorned, yet in all his best work he solves the problem of how to be simple without being bald and unpoetic.

But the tranquillity of mood, of which I have just spoken, arises not alone from the influence of what Matthew Arnold so happily called "Wordsworth's sweet calm" in the interpretation of nature and in the conception of the aims of life. It is partly the result of Mr. de Vere's own settled and strong convictions in matters of religious faith: convictions, it

may be, not more settled and more strong than those of Wordsworth—but leading him to far other conclusions than those to which the convictions of Wordsworth led that poet—leading him to join the Church of Rome. Whatever may be thought of this step it may be said at least that Mr. de Vere's noblest devotional poetry comes fitly from a sincere Roman Catholic, for it possesses something of the atmosphere which has endeared Thomas à Kempis to the devout of all creeds in all ages—a something which an able writer in the *Spectator* has aptly designated as Mr. de Vere's "spiritual serenity."

Much of Mr. de Vere's finest verse is cast in a meditative and serious mould, and is occasionally mystical. Hence probably it is that his poems have not been popular in the strict sense, though they have never lacked warm admirers. At his best he shows a distinct command over poetic methods. As a sonneteer he is especially successful; indeed, it is, perhaps, as a writer of sonnets that he, like his father, is most widely known. In reality, however, there is more variety in his poetry than is supposed by readers only partially acquainted with his work. Many of his idylls prove conclusively that he has caught the true feeling for the old Greek mythology which distinguishes some of the most splendid work of the great poets of our time. His drama of "Alexander the Great," so much praised by many competent critics, testifies to his dramatic power. His ability to write excellent poetry of the objective kind is further shown by "The Legends of St. Patrick," "The Legends of the Saxon Saints," and by the striking legendary poem "The Foray of Queen Meave."

The third son of Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt, the subject of this article was born at Curragh Chase in the county of Limerick, on January 10th, 1814, and received the names of Aubrey Thomas de Vere. Studying at Trinity College, Dublin, he adopted no profession other than that of letters. In 1832 he assumed by royal licence the ancestral surname of de Vere in place of Hunt. His first volume, "The Waldenses; or the Fall of Rora," appeared in 1842. This was followed in 1843 by "The Search after Proserpine, Recollections of Greece, and Other Poems." "The Search after Proserpine," a rendering of what the author truly calls one of the most "beautiful fictions of Greek mythology," is a lovely and, in many respects, a powerful poem. The comparative youth of the author when the poem was written lends to it an added interest, when we compare it with "Demeter," a rendering of the same subject, and a work of Tennyson's old age. In such a comparison Mr. de Vere's idyl necessarily suffers greatly, for the concentration of the latter poem has the effect of bringing into undue prominence Mr. de Vere's chief fault—a diffuseness the presence of which is felt not so much in particular lines and phrases as in entire passages. A comparison of the two poems shows also Mr. de Vere's occasional uncertainty as regards rhythm and rhyme. Among others of his earlier volumes of verse I may name "Poems, Miscellaneous and Sacred" (1853); and "The Sisters; Innisfail; and Other Poems" (1861).

"The Infant Bridal and Other Poems" (1864) is rich in example of Mr. de Vere's best work in various styles, the "Other Poems" consisting

largely of reprints from his earlier verses. "The Infant Bridal," though it contains passages of beauty and picturesqueness, is not altogether successful. "May Carols" are a series of poems chiefly dealing with nature. The tenth of these (p. 429) is worthy of Wordsworth himself, in interpretation of nature, and in delightful description of a still spring evening after the rain. "The Ode to the Daffodil" is another of Mr. Aubrey de Vere's most characteristic efforts in the same department of poetry. "The Dignity of Sorrow" (p. 430) is a fine example of his serious mood. So also is the sonnet called "Sorrow" (p. 428)—a sonnet so exquisite, and so full of the rare phase of submissive feeling which comes only to devout minds after long acquaintance with grief—that it will take a permanent place in our literature. Another sonnet, "Human Life," is a poem which George Herbert might have written, and possesses a certain subdued beauty all its own. I have already spoken of Mr. de Vere's success in handling classical themes. "The Antigone of Sophocles," the "Lines Written under Delphi," and "Ione," all in this volume, are good specimens of his workmanship in this kind of verse. But, perhaps, even a better specimen is to be found in "Glaucè" (p. 431). So appropriate is the atmosphere of this poem that the reader is influenced at once. As a writer of love poetry Mr. de Vere is often happy. The tender and exquisitely expressed sonnet beginning

"She whom this heart must ever hold most dear"

is familiar, and so, also, is the no less beautiful serenade beginning "Softly, O Midnight Hours!" (p. 433). A ballad entitled "The Bard Ethell"

is full of rough vigour well befitting the supposed narrator, an Irish bard of the thirteenth century. Probably, on the whole, "The Infant Bridal and Other Poems" is the most notable of Mr. de Vere's many volumes of verse, though it is not without traces of one of his chief faults—his tendency to diffuseness.

"Irish Odes and Other Poems," dedicated to Longfellow, appeared in 1869. Prefixed to the volume is a long and interesting essay in which Mr. de Vere discusses with deep insight the interpretation of the Irish character in literature. He holds, and with truth, that "the Irish character is one easily mistaken by the 'rough and ready' philosophy of the caricaturist," and maintains that it is "generous where love is not curdled into hate by wrong." Passing to matters more strictly literary, he makes some valuable remarks respecting the attitude of poetry towards the "sensational," and, especially, as to the distinction between true and false passion. This essay is one of Mr. de Vere's important contributions to prose literature. The volume contained many remarkable poems and sonnets, among others the sonnet entitled "Composed at Rydal" (p. 428), noteworthy not only for its intrinsic merit, but as evidence of Mr. de Vere's profound admiration for Wordsworth. "A Girl's Song" (p. 434) may likewise be quoted.

"The Legends of St. Patrick" (1872) are a series of picturesque legendary poems; "Alexander the Great," a poetical drama (1874) is more ambitious. It contains much noble verse, and is more successful than Mr. Aubrey de Vere's other play, "St. Thomas of Canterbury" (1876). In 1875 appeared a new

edition of his father's closet play, *Mary Tudor*. To this volume Mr. de Vere contributed a brief prefatory memoir of his father, and a scholarly introduction to *Mary Tudor*. "Antar and Zara; and Other Poems" (1877), dedicated to Lord Tennyson, was followed by "The Legends of the Saxon Saints" (1879), "The Foray of Queen Meave" (1882). The "Legends" tell in fluent blank verse many of the touching stories of Saxon times. Probably the most forcibly told are "How St. Cuthbert Kept his Pentecost at Carlisle" and "Bede's Last May." "The Foray of Queen Meave" is founded on an ancient Irish epic. The section entitled "The Combat at the Ford" (p. 421) is a striking example of Mr. de Vere's descriptive verse. "Legends and Records of the Church and Empire" was issued in 1887, and "Saint Peter's Chains," a series of sonnets, in 1888. A second portion of the first-named work will be entitled "Legends and Records of the Middle Ages."

Mr. de Vere published in 1850 "Picturesque Sketches of Greece and Turkey." Mainly distinguished, however, in prose by his excellent critical studies, his "Essays chiefly on Poetry" (1887) and "Essays, chiefly Literary and Ethical" (1889) have a permanent value. He "resides habitually" at Curragh Chase, which belongs to his brother, Sir Stephen E. de Vere, well known on account of his translation of the Odes of Horace—a translation which has received the commendation of many critics competent to form an opinion. Mr. de Vere has enjoyed the friendship of Lord Tennyson, Sir Henry Taylor, and many of the most eminent men of his time.

MACKENZIE BELL.

THE COMBAT AT THE FORD.

AUBREY DE VERE.

(FROM "THE FORAY OF QUEEN MEAVE."—THE EARLIEST SPECIMEN OF THE IRISH EPIC.)

ARGUMENT.

Queen Meave sends her herald to Ferdia the Firbolg, requiring him to engage with Cuchullain in single combat. Ferdia refuses to fight against his ancient friend: yet, later, he attends a royal banquet given in his honour; and there, being drawn aside through the witcheries of Princess Finobar, he consents to the fight. The charioteer of Ferdia sees Cuchullain advancing in his war-car to the Ford, and, rapt by a prophetic spirit, sings his triumph. For two days the ancient friends contend against each other with reluctance and remorse; but on the third day the battle-rage bursts fully forth: and, on the fourth, Cuchullain, himself pierced through with wounds innumerable, slays Ferdia by the Gae-Bulg. He lays his friend upon the bank, at its northern side, and, standing beside him, sings his dirge.

‘To this Ford

Thou cam’st the first, old comrade! choice of arms
Is therefore thine by right.’ Cuchullain spake:
Ferdia chose the javelin. Arrow-swift,
While still the charioteers brought back the shaft,
The missiles flew. Keen-eyed as ocean bird
That, high in sunshine poised, glimpses his prey
Beneath the wave, and downward swooping slays him,
Each watched the other’s movements, if an arm
Lifted too high, or buckler dropped too low
Left bare a rivet. Long that fight endured:
Three times exhausted sank their hands: three times
They sat on rocks for respite, each the other
Eyeing askance, not silent; ‘Lo the man
Who shields an ox-like or a swine-like race
That strikes no blow itself!’ or thus; ‘Ah pledge
Of amity eterne in old time sworn!

Ferdia, vow thy vow henceforth to maids!
The man-race nothing heeds thee!’

Evening fell

And stayed perforce that combat. Slowly drew
The warriors near; and as they noted, each,
The other bleeding, friendship unextinct
In all its strength returned: round either’s neck
That other wound his arms and kissed him thrice:
That night their coursers in the self-same field
Grazed, side by side: that night their charioteers
With rushes gathered from the self-same stream
Made smooth their masters’ beds, then sat themselves
By the same fire. Cuchullain sent the half
Of every healing herb that lulled his wounds
To staunch Ferdia’s; while to him in turn
Ferdia sent whate’er of meats or drinks
Held strengthening power or cordial, to allay
Distempered nerve or nimble spirit infuse,
In equal portions shared.

The second morn

They met at sunrise:—‘Thine the choice of arms;’
The Firbolg spake; the Gael made answer; ‘Spears!’
Then leaped the champions on their battle-cars
And launched them into battle. Dire their shock
In fiery orbits wheeling now; anon
Wheel locked in wheel. Profounder wounds by far
That day than on the first the warriors gored,
Since closer was the fight. With laughing lip
Not less that eve Cuchullain sang the stave
That chides in war ‘Fomorian obstinacy:’
Again at eve drew near they, slower now
For pain, and interwove fraternal arms:
Again their coursers in the self-same field
Grazed side by side, and from the self-same stream

Again their charioteers the rushes culled :
Again they shared alike both meats and drinks,
Again those herbs allaying o'er their wounds
With incantations laid.

Forlorn and sad

Peered the third morning o'er the vaporous woods
The wan grey river with its floating weed,
And bubble unirradiate. From the marge
Cuchullain sadly marked the advancing foe :—
'Alas, my brother ! beamless is thine eye ;
The radiance lives no longer on thy hair ;
And slow thy step.' The doomed one answered calm,
'Cuchullain, slow of foot, but strong of hand
Fate drags his victim to the spot decreed :
The choice to-day is mine : I choose the sword.'

So spake the Firbolg : and they closed in fight :
And straightway from his heart to arm and hand
Rushed up the strength of all that buried race
By him so loved ! Once more it swelled his breast :
Re-clothed in majesty each massive limb,
And flashed in darksome light of hair and eye
Resplendent as of old. Surpassing deeds
They wrought, while circled meteor-like their swords,
Then fell like heaven's own bolt on shield or helm.
Long hours they strove till morning's purer gleam
Vanished in noon. Sharper that day their speech ;
For, in the intenser present, years gone by
Hung but like pallid, thin, horizon clouds
O'er memory's loneliest limit. Evening sank
Upon the dripping groves and shuddering flood
With rainy wailings. Not as heretofore
Their parting. Haughtily their mail they tossed
Each to his followers. In the self-same field
That night their coursers grazed not ; neither sat

Their charioteers beside the self-same fire :
Nor sent they, each to other, healing herbs.

Ere morn the Firbolg drank the strength of dreams
Picturing his race's wrong ; and trumpet blasts
Swept o'er him blown from fields of ancient wars,
And thus he mused, half-wakened ; ' Not for Meave ;
Not for the popular suffrage ; not for her
That maid who fain had held me from the snare,
Fight I that fight whose end shall crown this day.
O race beloved, this day your vengeance dawns
Red in the East ! The mightiest of the Gaels
Goes down before me. What if both should die ?
So best ! Thus too the Firbolg is avenged !'
Thus mused he. Stately from his couch he rose,
And armed himself, sedate. Upon his breast
He laid, in iron sheathed, a huge, flat stone,
For thus he said, ' Though many a feat of arms
Is mine, from Scatha learned, or else self-taught,
The Gae-Bulg is Cuchullain's !' On his head
He fixed his helm, and on his arm his shield
Sable as night, with fifty bosses bound,
All brass ; the midmost like a noontide sun.

Cuchullain eyed him as he neared the Ford
And spake to Leagh ; ' This day, if thou should'st mark
This hand or slack or sluggish, hurl, as wont,
Sharp storm of arrowy railing from thy lips
That so the battle-anger from on high
May flame on me.' The choice of arms was his :
He chose ' the Ford-Feat.' On the Firbolg's brow
A shadow fell :—' All weapons there,' he mused,
' Have place alike : if on him falls the rage
He will not spare the Gae-bulg !' '

Well they knew

Both warriors, that the fortunes of that day
Must end the conflict ; that for one or both,
The sun that hour ascending shone his last :
Therefore all strength of onset till that hour
By each or loosed or hoarded, craft of fight
Reined in one moment but to spring the next
Forward in might more terrible, compared
With that last battle was a trivial thing ;
Whilst every weapon, javelin, spear, or sword,
Lawful alike that day, scattered abroad
Huge flakes of dinted mail ; from every wound
Bounded the life-blood of a heart athirst
For victory or for death. The vernal day
Panted with summer ardours, while aloft
Noontide, a fire-tress'd Fury, waved her torch,
Kindling the lit grove and its youngling green
From the azure-blazing zenith. As the heat
So waxed the warriors' frenzy. Hours went by :
That day they sought not rest on rock or mound,
Held no discourse. Slowly the sun declined ;
And as wayfarers oft when twilight falls
Advance with strength renewed, so they, refreshed,
Surpassed their deeds at morning. With a bound
Cuchullain, from a high bank springing, lit
Full on the broad boss of Ferdia's shield,
His dagger-point down turned. With spasm of arm
Instant the Firbolg from its sable rim
Cast him astonished. Upward from the Ford
Again Cuchullain reached that shield : again
With spasm of knee Ferdia flung him far,
While Leagh in scorn reviled him : ' As the flood
Shoots on the tempest's blast its puny foam ;
The oak-tree casts its dead leaf on the wave ;

The mill-wheel showers its spray ; the shameless woman
Hurls on the mere that babe which was her shame,
So hurls Ferdia forth that fairy-child
Whom men misdeemed for warrior !'

Then from heaven
Came down upon Cuchullain, like the night,
The madness-rage. The Foes confronted met :
Shivered their spears from point to haft : their swords
Flashed lightnings round them. Fate-compelled, their feet
Drew near, then reached, that stream which backward fled
Leaving its channel dry. While raged that fight
Cuchullain's stature rose, huge bulk, immense,
Ascending still : as high Ferdia towered
Like Fomor old, or Nemed from the sea,
Those shields, their covering late from foot to helm,
Shrinking, so seemed it, till above them beamed
Shoulders and heads. So close that fight, their crests
That waved defiance, mingled in mid-air ;
While all along the circles of their shields
And all adown their swords ran, mad with rage,
Viewless for speed the demons of dark moors
And war-sprites of the valleys, Bocanachs
And Banacahs, whose scream, so keen its edge,
Might shear the centuried forest as the scythe
Shears meadow grass. To these in dread response
Thundered far off from sea-caves billow-beat
And halls rock-vaulted 'neath the eternal hills,
That race Tuatha, giant once, long since
To pigmy changed, that forge from molten ores
For aye their clanging weapons, shield or spear,
On stony anvils, waiting the day decreed
Of vengeance on the Gael. That tumult scared
The horses of the host of Mcave, that brake
From war-car or the tethering rope, and spread

Ruin around. Camp-followers first, then chiefs
Innumerable were dragged along, or lay
'Neath broken axle, dead. The end was nigh :
Cuchullain's shield splintered upon his arm
Served him no more ; and through his fenceless side
Ferdia drave the sword. Then first the Gael
Hurled forth this taunt ; 'The Firbolg, bribed by Meave,
Has sold his ancient friend !' Ferdia spake,
'No Firbolg he, that man in Scatha's isle,
Who won a maid, then left her !' Backward stepped
Cuchullain paces three : he reached the bank ;
He uttered low ; 'The Gae-Bulg !' Instant, Leagh
Within his hand had lodged it. Bending low,
Low as that stream,—the war-game's crowning feat,—
He launched it on Ferdia's breast. The shield,
The iron plate beneath, the stone within it,
Like shallow ice-films 'neath a courser's hoof
Burst. All was o'er. To earth the warrior sank :
Dying, he spake : 'Not thine this deed, O friend—
'Twas Meave who winged that bolt into my heart !'

Then ran Cuchullain to that great one dead,
And raised him in his arms, and laid him down
Beside the Ford, but on its northern bank,
Not in that realm by Ailill swayed and Meave :
Long time he looked the dead man in the face ;
Then by him fell in swoon. 'Cuchullain, rise !
The men of Erin be upon thee ! Rise !'
Thus Leagh. He answered, waking ; 'Let them come !
To me what profit if I live or die ?
The man I loved is dead !'

1 The Gae-bulg was a terrible weapon of war, almost always fatal, but which hardly any warrior was able to use.

SONNETS.

AUBREY DE VERE.

I.—SORROW.

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee ; do thou
With courtesy receive him ; rise and bow ;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave ;
Then lay before him all thou hast ; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality ; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness : Grief should be,
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate ;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free ;
Strong to consume small troubles ; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to
the end.

II.—COMPOSED AT RYDAL.

September 1868.

THE last great man by manlier times bequeath'd
To these our noisy and self-boasting days
In this green valley rested, trod these ways,
With deep calm breast this air inspiring breathed ;
True bard, because true man, his brow he wreathed
With wild-flowers only, singing Nature's praise ;
But Nature turn'd, and crown'd him with her bays,
And said, "Be thou *my* Laureate." Wisdom sheath'd
In song love-humble ; contemplations high,
That built like larks their nests upon the ground ;
Insight and vision ; sympathies profound
That spann'd the total of humanity—
These were the gifts which God poured forth at large
On men through him ; and he was faithful to his charge,

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

AUBREY DE VERE.

I.—A SWEET EXHAUSTION SEEMS TO HOLD.

(MAY CAROLS, X.)

A SWEET exhaustion seems to hold
In spells of calm the shrouded eve :
The gorse itself a beamless gold
Puts forth,—yet nothing seems to grieve.

The dewy chaplets hang on air,
The willowy fields are silver-grey,
Sad odours wander here and there ;—
And yet we feel that it is May.

Relaxed, and with a broken flow,
From dripping bowers low carols swell
In mellow, glassier tones, as though
They mounted through a bubbling well.

The crimson orchis scarce sustains
Upon its drenched and drooping spire
The burden of the warm soft rains ;
The purple hills grow nigh and nigher.

Nature, suspending lovely toils,
On expectations lovelier broods,
Listening, with lifted hand, while coils
The flooded rivulet through the woods.

She sees, drawn out in vision clear,
A world with summer radiance drest,
And all the glories of that year
Still sleeping in her virgin breast.

II.—THE DIGNITY OF SORROW.

I.

I HAVE not seen you since the shadow fell
From Heaven against your door ;
I know not if you bear your sorrow well ;
I know but this,—your hearth is cold ; your floor
Will feel that soft and gliding tread no more.

II.

I know our ancient friendship now is over.
I can love still, and so will not complain :
I have not loved in vain ;
Taught long that art of sadness to discover
Which draws stern solace from the wells of pain.
You love the dead alone ; or you have lost
The power and life of love in Time's untimely frost.

III.

You have stood up in the great Monarch's court,
The court of Death ; in spirit you have seen
His lonely shades serene
Where all the mighty men of old resort.
The eyes of Proserpine,
Heavy and black, have rested upon thine.
Her vintage, wine from laurel-berries prest,
You raised—and laid you then the goblet down,
Scared by that Queen's inevitable frown,
Just as the marble touched your panting breast ?
O ! in the mirror of that prison cold
What Shadow or what Shape did you behold ?

IV.

And she is dead : and you have long been dying ;
And are recovered, and live on.—O, Friend,
Say, what shall be the end
O leaf-lamenting boughs and wintry sighing ?

When will the woods that moan
 Resume their green array ?
 When will the dull, sad clouds be over blown,
 And a calm sunset close our stormy day ?

v.

My thoughts pursue you still : I call them back :
 Once more they seek you, like the birds that rise
 Up from the reeds, and in a winding track
 Circle the field in which their forage lies ;—
 Or like some poor and downcast Pensioner,
 Depressed and timid though his head be grey,
 That moves with curving steps to greet his Lord,
 Whom he hath watched all day—
 Yet lets him pass away without a word ;
 And gazes on his footsteps from afar.

III.—GLAUCÈ.

I LOVE you, pretty maid, for you are young :
 I love you, pretty maid, for you are fair :
 I love you, pretty maid, for you love me.

They tell me that, a babe, smiling you gazed
 Upon the stars, with open, asking eyes,
 And tremulous lips apart. Erelong, self-taught,
 You found for every star and every flower
 Legends and names and fables sweet and new.
 I, since I loved you, am grown half immortal !

O that when far away I still might see thee !
 How oft when wearied with the din of life
 On thee mine eyes would rest, thy Grecian heavens
 Brightening that orbèd brow !
 Hesper should shine upon thee—lamp of Love,
 Beneath whose radiance thou wert born.—O Hesper !
 Thee will I love and reverence evermore.

Bind up that shining hair into a knot,
And let me see that polished neck of thine
Uprising from the bed snow-soft, snow-white
In which it rests so gracefully! What God
Hath drawn upon thy forehead's ivory plane
Those two clear streaks of sweet and glistening black,
Lifted in earnest mirth or lovely awe?
Open those Pleiad eyes, liquid and tender,
And let me lose myself among their depths!
Caress me with thine infant hands, and tell me
Old tales divine that love makes ever new
Of Gods and men entoled in flowery nets,
Of heroes sighing all their youth away,
And which the fairest flower of Venus' isle.
Come forth, dear maid, the day is calm and cool,
And bright though sunless. Like a long green scarf,
The tall Pines crowning yon grey promontory
In distant ether hang, and cut the sea.
But lovers better love the dell, for there
Each is the other's world.—How indolently
The tops of those pale poplars bend and sway
Over the violet-braided river brim!
Whence comes their motion, for no wind is heard,
And the long grasses move not, nor the reeds?
Here we will sit, and watch the rushes lean
Like locks, along the leaden-coloured stream
Far off; and thou, O child, shalt talk to me
Of Naiads and their loves. A blissful life
They lead, who live beneath the flowing waters:
They cherish calm, and think the sea-weeds fair;
They love to sleek their tresses in the sun;
They love each other's beauty; love to stand
Among the lilies, holding back their tresses
And listening, with their gentle cheek reclined

Upon the flood, to some sweet melody
Of Pan or shepherd piping in lone woods,
Until the unconscious tears run down their face.
Mild are their loves, nor burdensome their thoughts—
And would that such a life were mine and thine !

IV.—SONG.

I.

SOFTLY, O midnight Hours !
Move softly o'er the bowers
Where lies in happy sleep a girl so fair !
For ye have power, men say,
Our hearts in sleep to sway,
And cage cold fancies in a moonlight snare.
Round ivory neck and arm
Enclasp a separate charm :
Hang o'er her poised ; but breathe nor sigh nor prayer.
Silently ye may smile,
But hold your breath the while,
And let the wind sweep back your cloudy hair !

II.

Bend down your glittering urns
(Ere yet the dawn returns)
And star with dew the lawn her feet shall tread ;
Upon the air rain balm ;
Bid all the woods be calm ;
Ambrosial dreams with healthful slumbers wed.
That so the Maiden may
With smiles your care repay
When from her couch she lifts her golden head ;
Waking with earliest birds,
Ere yet the misty herds
Leave warm 'mid the grey grass their dusky bed.

V.—A GIRL'S SONG.

UNKIND was he, the first who sang
The spring-tide shamed, the flowers decay !
What woman yet without a pang
Could hear of Beauty's fleeting May ?
O Beauty ! with me bide, and I
A maid will live, a maid will die.

Could I be always fair as now,
And hear, as now, the Poets sing
"The long-lashed eyes, the virgin brow,
The hand well worthy kiss and ring,"
Then, then some casual grace were all
That e'er from me on man should fall !

I sailed last night on Ina's stream :
Warm 'mid the wave my fingers lay ;
The cold-lipped Naiad in my dream
Kissed them, and sighed, and slipped away—
Ah me ! down life's descending tide
Best things, they say, the swiftliest glide.

Thomas Westwood.

1814—1888.

THOMAS WESTWOOD was born on the 26th of November 1814, and was one of the few men who in the latter part of the century cherished personal recollections of Charles Lamb. As a boy and youth he was on terms of intimate friendship with the gentle "Elia," not a little of whose spirit seems to have fallen upon him. He became an amiable and accomplished man, an able and well-read critic, and a skilful writer of original and graceful verse. He was an enthusiastic angler, and collected a valuable library of books on the piscatorial art. The "Chronicle of the Complete Angler," published in 1864, a charming example of his prose writing, gives some tantalising peeps at the old house at Enfield, with its little overgrown orchard, in the forked branches of an ancient apple-tree of which our author first familiarised himself, through Charles Lamb's copy, with Isaac Walton's immortal work. These were indeed privileged days. "Alas!" he says in his preface, "that of that genial circle of choice spirits not one should be left—Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Barry Cornwall, Hunt, Hood—in the very enumeration of their names, I feel as if something of myself had died out with each—some warmth of life grown chill—some sunshine of the soul faded for ever." In the year 1844

he went to reside in Belgium, where he held the post of Brussels' director and secretary of the Tournay and Jurbise railway. Notwithstanding the claims of business and the temptations of the rod, he found time to produce several volumes of verse—"Poems" (1840); "Beads from a Rosary" (1843); "The Burden of the Bell" (1850); "Berries and Blossoms" (1855); "The Quest of the Sancgreall" (1868); and a final volume entitled "Gathered in the Gloaming" (1885), in which he reprinted such of his poems as he deemed fittest to survive. He died on the 13th of March, 1888. Thomas Westwood made no pretensions to the rôle of a great poet, and if it be a merit to know one's own sphere and recognise its limitations, certainly that merit was his. His "Song of the Small Poets by a dissentient member of the fraternity," evidences his sincerity in this regard, and for the rest our selection fairly represents his varied gifts. "The Quest of the Sancgreall" shows imagination, a love of colour, and powers of description of a high order, while "Hey for Coquet" and his other shorter poems and songs display no little lyrical skill. "Love in the Alpuxaras" (p. 440) drew from Landor the remark that he would have liked to have written it. One poem from the "Berries and Blossoms'" volume, a poem which originally appeared in the *Athenæum*, and was not reprinted in the final volume of the poet, "Little Bell," surely deserved a place there, as indeed it does in any collection of child-poetry. It has an autobiographic interest in that it refers to a younger sister of Mrs. Westwood.

ALFRED H. MILES.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THOMAS WESTWOOD.

I.—SPRINGLETS.

I.

OVER the winter eaves
The bare boughs clamber and swing—
Through a rustle of withered leaves
I hear the voice of the Spring.

Year after year departs
On pitiless, whirling wing,
But yet, in my heart of hearts,
I feel the touch of the Spring.

Who knows? when in graveyard drear,
I lie, and the throstles sing,
I may still awake with the year,
Still hear the voice of the Spring.

II.

Slow, horses, slow,
As through the wood we go—
We would count the stars in heaven,
Hear the grasses grow.

Watch the cloudlets few
Dappling the deep blue,
In our open palms outspread,
Catch the blessed dew.

Slow, horses, slow,
As through the wood we go—
We would see fair Dian rise,
With her huntress bow.

We would hear the breeze
Ruffling the dim trees—
Hear its sweet love-ditty set
To endless harmonies.

Slow, horses, slow,
As through the wood we go—
All the beauty of the night,
We would learn and know.

II.—ECHO.

‘**W**HAT a silence!’ say you—wait awhile
Till the folding hills encircle us,
And the rock-chasms yawn in rude defile ;
Then we’ll rouse up Echo, shouting thus—
Echo, Echo, Echo, Pan is coming !
Pan, with all his horns and hunters coming !
Wake up, Echo, wake up swift from slumber !

And sweet Echo, half in joy, half fear,
At such olden, but o’er hasty greeting,
Quick from hill to hill the tale will bear,
Quick through gorge and glen our cry repeating,
Echo, Echo, Echo, Pan is coming !
Pan, with all his horns and hunters coming !
Wake up, Echo, wake up swift from slumber !

Pan ! strange name to utter ’mid the glory
Of truth’s sunshine, in this later day,
But poor Echo, born of pagan story,
Loves such salutation best, they say ;
Shout then, Echo, Echo, Pan is coming !
Pan, with all his horns and hunters coming !
Wake up, Echo, wake up swift from slumber !

III.—“O WIND OF THE MOUNTAIN!”

(TO HIS YOUNG WIFE.)

O WIND of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !
I have a prayer to whisper in thine ear :—
Hush, pine-tree, hush ! Be silent, sycamore !
Cease thy wild waving, ash-tree, old and hoar !
Flow softly, stream ! My voice is faint with fear—
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !

In the dull city, by the lowland shore,
Pale grows the cheek, so rosy-fresh of yore.
Woe for the child—the fair blithe-hearted child—
Once thy glad playmate on the breezy wild !
Hush, pine-tree, hush !—my voice is faint with fear—
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !

Pale grows the cheek, and dim the sunny eyes,
And the voice falters, and the laughter dies.
Woe for the child ! She pines, on that sad shore,
For the free hills and happy skies of yore.
Hush, river, hush !—my voice is faint with fear—
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !

O Wind of the Mountain, thou art swift and strong—
Follow, for love's sake, though the way be long.
Follow, oh ! follow, over down and dale,
To the far city in the lowland vale.
Hush, pine-tree, hush !—my voice is faint with fear—
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !

Kiss the dear lips, and bid the laughers rise—
Flush the wan cheek, and brighten the dim eyes ;
Sing songs of home, and soon, from grief and pain,
Win back thy playmate, blessèd Wind, again !
Win back my darling—while away my fear—
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear !

IV.—LOVE IN THE ALPUXARAS.

UNDER a cork-tree, deep in the shade
Of the Alpuxaras, I wooed a maid ;
She was plump as a chestnut, grown
In a Catalan sunshine—and as brown.
First, I wooed her with smiles, and then
Sighed “like furnace,” o’er and agen.
Long she listened, then laughing gay,
Sang me a snatch of an ancient lay.

“There was a damsel lived in a dell,—
Dames of Nevada ! Dames of Nevada !
And a Cavalier bold, he loved her well
He loved her well—
Knights of Grenada ! Knights of Grenada !”

Flinty and rough was the ground, ah me !
Yet down I dropped upon bended knee,
And vow upon vow I volubly uttered,
While my heart beat quick and my pulses fluttered.
In delicate phrases, quaintly adorned,
I coaxed and wheedled, flattered and fawned ;
But lo ! in the midst, with an “all very pretty”
Impertinent air, she took up her ditty :

“Quoth the damsel, ‘Sir, be frank and free’—
Dames of Nevada ! Dames of Nevada !
‘Dare you wed a maiden of low degree,’
Of low degree—
Knights of Grenada ! Knights of Grenada !”

Saints ! was it any thing in the air
Struck such a chill through my blood ? I swear

I was ready to faint, and pale and red
 Went I by turns, while that one word '*wed*'
 Smote on my ears like a tocsin, quelling
 Visions of bliss with its sudden knelling.
 Curled the red lip of the maid, and then
 Her clear voice broke into song age :—

“ Blank looked the suitor and sore forlorn—
 Dames of Nevada ! Dames of Nevada !
 And the damsel laughed his love to scorn,
 His love to scorn—
 Knights of Grenada ! Knights of Grenada ! ”

Scorn ! —'twas the only word, in sooth ;
 There was no disguising that plain truth—
 With a lifted brow and a flashing eye,
 She fronted me in her purity,
 And her glance—oh ! it made my soul confess
 Its shame, and her own true nobleness :
 Mute and abashed I stood, and anon
 With a sigh she left me—singing on :

“ ‘ Albeit a cavalier bold,’ quoth she—
 Dames of Nevada ! Dames of Nevada !
 ‘ A lover art thou of low degree,
 Of low degree !’
 Knights of Grenada ! Knights of Grenada ! ”

V.—HEART-USES.

HEARTS are not for teasing, Lady mine—
 Hearts for loving, hearts for firm believing,
 For strong hoping, never for deceiving,
 Nay, nor yet for teasing, Lady mine.

Hearts are not for scorning, Lady mine—
Hearts for grieving, hearts for bitter breaking,
For fast clinging, never for forsaking,
Nay, nor yet for scorning, Lady mine.

Hearts are all for loving, Lady mine—
Loving—tease me with thine eyes' endeavour,
Scorn me with thy lips, but still, for ever,
Hearts are all for loving, Lady mine.

VI.—LITTLE BELL.

“He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.”

The Ancient Mariner.

PIPED the Blackbird, on the beechwood spray,
“Pretty maid, slow wandering this way,
What’s your name?” quoth he.
“What’s your name? Oh! stop and straight unfold,
Pretty maid, with showery curls of gold.”
“Little Bell,” said she.

Little Bell sat down beneath the rocks,
Tossed aside her gleaming, golden locks,
“Bonny bird!” quoth she,
“Sing me your best song, before I go.”
“Here’s the very finest song, I know,
Little Bell,” said he.

And the Blackbird piped—you never heard
Half so gay a song from any bird;
Full of quips and wiles,

Now so round and rich, now soft and slow,
All for love of that sweet face below,
 Dimpled o'er with smiles.

And the while that bonny bird did pour
His full heart out, freely, o'er and o'er,
 'Neath the morning skies,
In the little childish heart below
All the sweetness seem'd to grow and grow,
And shine forth in happy overflow
 From the brown, bright eyes.

Down the dell she tripp'd, and through the glade—
Peep'd the Squirrel from the hazel shade,
 And, from out the tree,
Swung and leap'd and frolick'd, void of fear,
While bold Blackbird piped, that all might hear—
 “Little Bell!” piped he.

Little Bell sat down amid the fern :
“Squirrel, Squirrel ! to your task return ;
 Bring me nuts !” quoth she.
Up, away ! the frisky Squirrel hies,
Golden wood-lights glancing in his eyes,
 And adown the tree,
Great ripe nuts, kiss'd brown by July sun,
In the little lap drop, one by one—
Hark ! how Blackbird pipes, to see the fun !
 “*Happy* Bell !” pipes he.

Little Bell look'd up and down the glade :
“Squirrel, Squirrel, from the nut-tree shade,
Bonny Blackbird, if you're not afraid,
 Come and share with me !”

Down came Squirrel, eager for his fare,
Down came bonny Blackbird, I declare ;
Little Bell gave each his honest share—
Ah ! the merry three !

And the while those frolick playmates twain
Piped and frisk'd from bough to bough again,
'Neath the morning skies,
In the little childish heart below,
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,
And shine out in happy overflow,
From her brown, bright eyes.

By her snow-white cot, at close of day,
Knelt sweet Bell, with folded palms, to pray ;
Very calm and clear
Rose the praying voice, to where, unseem,
In blue heaven, an angel shape serene
Paused awhile to hear.

“What good child is this,” the angel said,
“That, with happy heart, beside her bed,
Prays so lovingly ?”
Low and soft, oh ! very low and soft,
Croon'd the Blackbird in the orchard croft,
“Bell, *dear* Bell !” croon'd he.

“Whom God's creatures love,” the angel fair
Murmur'd, “God doth bless with angels' care ;
Child, thy bed shall be
Folded safe from harm ; love deep and kind
Shall watch round and leave good gifts behind,
Little Bell, for thee.”

VII.—HEY FOR COQUET!

A WA' frae the smoke an' the smother !
Awa' frae the crush o' the thrang !
Awa' frae the labour an' pother,
That hae fettered our freedom sae lang !
For the May 's i' fu' bloom i' the hedges,
An' the laverock's aloft i' the blue,
An' the south-wind sings low i' the sedges,
By haughs that are silvery wi' dew.
Up angler, off wi' each shackle !
Up gad an' gaff, an' awa' !
Cry—hurrah ! for the canny red "hackle,
The hackle that tackled them a' !"

Off, off to the bonnie brown Norland !—
It haunts me for aye i' my dreams ;—
To torrent, an' mountain an' muirland,
An' to Coquet, the queen o' the streams !
To Coquet, the beautifu' river,
Beloved by the bards that sae lang
Upheld her the foremost for ever,
An' hallowed her banks, wi' their sang !

O Sharperton streams, we are comin' !
O Halystane, greet us wi' glee !
O Rothbury, deep i' the gloaming,
We'll bring our first creelfu' to thee !
An' Alwinton, Harbottle, Hepple,—
If the saumon, the glorious, the strang,
Still lurk i' your current's quick ripple,
We'll measure their inches ere lang !

From Blindburn, 'midst crag an' hill-hollow,
To Warkworth, anear the salt main,
Each turn o' fair Coquet we'll follow,
Each haunt o' our childhood regain.
At Thropton, we winna dissemble
Fu' hearts, nor at Harbottle-hold,
An' at Weeldon, wi' voices a-tremble,
We'll pledge THE GREAT FISHERS O' AULD!

We'll see if the Sharperton lassies
Are winsome as in our young days,—
If they'll rin to the ringin' o' glasses,
Or the lilt o' the auld merry lays.
Oh! we'll shake off the years wi' our laughter,
We'll wash out our wrinkles wi' dew,
An', reckless o' what may come after,
We'll revel in boyhood anew.

Then back to the smoke an' the smother;
The uproar an' crush o' the thrang;
An' back to the labour and pother—
But happy an' hearty an' strang;
Wi' a braw light o' mountain and muirland,
Out flashing frae forehead an' e'e,
Wi' a blessing flung back to the Norland,
An' a thousand, dear Coquet, to thee,
As again we resume the old shackle,
Our gad an' our gaff stowed awa'—
An'—good-bye to the canny "red hackle,
The hackle that tackled them a'!"

THE QUEST OF THE SANCGREALL.

THOMAS WESTWOOD.

I.—GUENEVERE AT CAMELOT.

THE snowdrop pierced the snow; with belts of fire,
The crocus blazed i' the borders: Spring o'erran
The earth, fleet-footed, till the whitethorn bush
Broke into milky blossom of the May.
Queen Guenevere, with absent eyes, and cheeks
Love-pallid, paced her pleasance to and fro,
And twisted posies of red gilly-flowers,
Pansies and purple-globed anemones,
Then tossed them from her in a storm of sighs.

One morn, when summer drew to its decline,
A straggling cavalcade of pilgrims passed,
Foot-sore, beneath the walls of Camelot;
A woeful crew! riddled by strife and storm,
Mere rags and relics of humanity,
A vision of dry bones. These, one and all,
She questioned, and with blurred and blistered lips,
They babbled of strange lands and savage men,
Of shrines in the deep Orient, home of God—
Of dungeons and disasters, racks and chains—
But of Sir Lancelot knowledge had they none.
So with cold thanks she sped them on their way,
And laughed a vacant laugh to see them flit,
A string of scarce-crows, through the yellowing corn,

Then swarthy reapers swarmed i' the ripe fields,—
The sickle glittered in the sun; the shocks
Stood berry-brown; and to each homestead came,—
Because a sense of plenty filled the air,—
Barefooted monks, with pouches open-mouthed,
Alms-begging for the needs of Mother Church.

Such, from her lattice leaning, Guenevere
Would beckon, and, into greedy hands upheld,
Drop royal dole, and to their garrulous talk
With hungry ears give heed ;—a whining tale
Of hardships dire, and rough monastic rule ;
Short commons, toilsome trappings to and fro,
Penance by day, and Sathanas and his imps
Harrying their souls in purgatorial dreams.
Yea . . . many cities had they seen, and men,
But nought observed . . . it was a weary world !
(Glib down their gullets gurgled the red wine—)
Knights, maybe, by the score—a roystering rout !—
But of Sir Lancelot knowledge had they none . . .
'Twixt *Salve !* and *Pax vobiscum !* nought but this.

So evermore the months drew to a close ;
The apple ripened to its ruddy prime ;
The pear dropped, golden, in the orchard grass ;
Athwart the gusty sky long flights of storks,
With whirl of wing and noisy clap of beak,
Passed southward . . . still no tidings, and the queen,
At midnight, kneeling in her oratory,
A *mea culpa !* quivering on her lip,
A *MEA MAXIMA CULPA !* heard the bells
Roll forth their brazen clangour o'er the world,
Ring out the old year, welcome in the New.

II.—THE LEGEND OF THE SYREN ISLES.

(A SELECTION.)

MOTIONLESS sat the shadow at the helm—
And steered them on, through fen and fallow tract,
Pasture and plain and limitless expanse
Of windy waste, till, widening to the main,

The river ran in shallows, or was caught
In weedy pools, and swerving from its course,
The shallop shuddered with a grating keel.
Then seemed it to Sir Galahad, in his dream,
A woman's cry crept curdling o'er the wave,
Wild, inarticulate—crept o'er pool and bay,
And winding creek, and gully of the shore ;
Sobbed 'mid the sedges—round the boulders wailed
And whimpered, wandering up and wandering down.
And ere it ceased, the stagnant stream began
To plash and whirl and dimple ;—now an arm,
And now a dripping head, and now a foot,
Flashed up and frisked and flirted in the moon ;
The water grew alive with elfin fry,
Quaint atomies, with fins and flapping tails,
That piped a reedy music, out of tune ;
Kelpy and Neck, and all their kith and kin,
Came at the summons, and a shimmering throng
Of creatures, lissom-limbed and lithe, that shed
A sea-green glory round them as they swam.
All these swarmed round the shallop, and at a sign
From her that steered, made plain a path through
 beds
Of osiers, and the tangled undergrowth,
And drove it o'er the shallows and the sands. . . .

And seaward, like an arrow, shot the bark ;
The seething water rustled round its prow ;
The silver water glittered in its wake ;
The stars spun round and round ; the chalky flats
Broke, gradual, into beetling cliff and crag,
And soon Sir Galahad, in his drowse, was 'ware
Dim headlands loomed majestic through mist,
And the salt billows flecked him with their foam.

Then rose that mystic moan anew, and swept,
Shrill, o'er the shuddering waves and through the
depths—

Till, from the under-world, surged up the brood
Of ocean, the great sea-snake, coil on coil,
The kraken, demon-eyed, and hundred-armed,
The sea-wolf and narwhal, mermaids and men—
A ghastly crew of scaled and slimy things—
With hiss, and whoop, and hollo, swift they came,—
Dashing the spray in moon-bows overhead,—
And huddled, interlaced, with one combined
Impulsion, snout and fin and fold and tail,
They sent the shallop skimming through the foam,
Into the distance, fleet as shooting star. . . .

A haze slid down the headlands o'er the main—
A blinding haze, that blotted out the stars ;
The shallop clove it, as a kestrel cleaves
The gloaming, hieing homeward to its nest.
A whirlwind wrenched the air, and swooping, made
Mad havoc of the sea ; but wind and wave
The shallop stemmed, as stems an angry swan
The blasts and billows of its native tarn.
From out the foam, a jagged and hideous reef
Rose horrent—range on range of splintered crag.
With serpentine, swift motion, in and out,
And to and fro, betwixt the deadly saws,
The shallop flitted, and the reef was past,—
But in its rear, a mighty mountain wall
Towered absolute—no outlet—on its brow
A blackness—smooth its shining front as steel.
Then roared the kraken, and the great sea-snake,
Uncoiling, clanked his jaws and hissed in ire.
Bubbled the thick shoal-water with the plunge

Of furious limb—with swish of tail and fin
And the swart merman yelled beneath the moon.

But at the helm, the shadow, swaying, sung
A song of glamour, stern, that pierced through rock,
And water, to the deep root of the world.
A shiver shook the air—the sea leaped up ;
And tossed its crest and shrieked in mad affright ;
Shuddered the mighty mountain wall ; its front
Grew blurred with cracks and ruinous fissures, rent
From base to battlement, and the loathly crew,
Cheered by the din and downfall and dismay,
Renewed their toil ;—with sharp, impetuous stroke,
The shallop smit the rock—a narrow cleft
Opened, grew wider, gaped—the bark shot through—
And lo ! the roseate morning in the heavens
Flushing the splendours of the syren seas,
Up sprang Sir Lancelot, his face a-blaze,
Compassed with glory : at his feet he saw
A white-limbed maiden, fair, as lily grown
In a God's garden. On her shoulders bare,
And ivory breast half-veiled, the sunshine fell
Gracious and golden,—laughed in her blue eyes
And dallied in the dimples of her cheek.
With subtle smile she drew Sir Lancelot down
Beside her knee, and whispered in his ear—
Pointed with level finger to the land,
And thrilled him with the passion of her glance.
And through the web of her delightful hair,
That floated o'er his forehead and his face,
And through the murmurous music of her speech,
He saw the lawny islets stud the sea,
Like bowers of beauty, with their blossoming woods,
And columned temples in the cedarn shade ;

He saw the velvet pastures netted o'er
With silver brooks ; and faint and far away,
Translucent in the crystal morning air,
Myriads of mountain peaks magnificent,
Rose-tinted, pearl, opal, and amethyst,
Lifting their gemmed tiaras up to heaven.

Sir Lancelot laughed beneath the syren's spell—
Sir Lancelot laughed to feel her tresses dance
On cheek and chin, with motion of the tide ;
His face was haggard, but a love-light burned
Under his eyelids from a heart on fire.
By the smooth margin of the nearest isle
A troop of sportive nymphs beheld them come,—
A rosy rout, that dabbled in the surf,
Or shrieking, chased each other, fleet and slim
As Atalanta, o'er the shining sands.
They hailed Sir Lancelot, beckoning from afar,
And pointing to the blue, transparent deep,
Lured him to swim. Sir Lancelot leaped and swam,
Still laughing, as he battled with the spray ;
Then fifty frolic creatures, with a flash
Like a snow-avalanche, plunged, and met the knight
Midway, and cheering, drew him slowly on ;
A darksome waif, wreathed round with gleaming
heads,
And overlaced with supple, sensuous arms,
He reached the shore—there, loud the girlish glee,
And kind the greeting ; with embrace and kiss
They bade him welcome to the happy isles—
Unbraced his armour, severed strap and tag,
Then dallied with his hair and with his beard,
And marvelled at the stature of the man,
And at his sinewy strength of chest and arm.

Passive, the knight went wheresoe'er they would.
They led him through the boskage of the shore,
And through the winding vales and odorous woods,
Till faint their frolic grew, and faint the chime
Of laughter and of song. They led him on
To festal bowers—to strange forbidden rites—
To joys accursed. Ah me ! Sir Lancelot,
King Arthur's foremost knight ! Sir Lancelot,
The crown of Christendom ! Sir Lancelot,
The elect of Christ ! gone, gone, for ever gone !

Meanwhile, Sir Galahad, leaning 'gainst the mast,
Gazed, with astonished eyes and wavering mind.
Soothly, the wizard woman touched his hand—
'Transfigured she—for when their glances met,
Sir Galahad fell a-tremble ;—he beheld
The pure, pale face of a belovèd maid,
His best-lovèd in the years that were—
Isonde, the Flower of Lyonesse, his betrothed,
Snatched from him by the Norsemen in a raid,
Ere yet his beard was grown ;—Isonde, the child,
His playmate on the broomy hills of home,
That decked his steed with ribbons, or the red
Ash-berries, and, when winter winds piped loud,
Rode by his side to see the wolf at bay.
“ Isonde ! ” he gasped—she nestled in his arms—
And, “ Galahad, good my brother,” soft she said,
“ Oh ! is it well with thee ? oh ! is it well ? ”
She said—“ The Norsemen held me in their bonds—
A weary time, ah me ! a weary time ! . . .
Last night a pitying angel loosed my bonds,
And sent me forth to seek my love afar,
And guide him to a land of joy and peace—
And I am here,—O Galahad,” soft she said,—

“ Say, is it well with thee—say, is it well ? ”

He held her folded in his fond embrace,
As by the grassy marge the shallop stayed ;
And they could hear the woodlands ring with song
And see the glens and glades flush out with flowers.
Lightly to shore the agile maiden sprang ;
But he, in act to follow, paused, for lo !
From out a neighbouring copse, a snow-white bird
Fluttered, as chased by hawk, and, soaring, shrieked,
And shrieked anew, till all the welkin rang.
He turned to track its flight,—sweet Mother of God !
What vision fixed him ! Pale, in the deep sky,
Angels innumerable, shining tier on tier,
That circled upward, heavenward, higher and higher ;
And, floating in their midst, half-seen, half-hid
By flicker of white vans, the rosy cloud
That round the Sanggreall burned at Camelot !
Sir Galahad watched their flitting, and was 'ware
The while they vanished, melting in the blue,
Each angel face looked down on him from heaven,
And every face was sad. He burst in sobs ;—
He staggered, conscience-stricken, and from depths
Of agony and shame and self-contempt,
He uttered such a cry as must have reached
To GOD THE FATHER, for a sudden night
Fell on the golden land and sapphire sea,—
And he dropped stark and senseless on the deck,
Nor heard the winnowing of the angelic wings,
Nor saw the shining multitude descend,
And ring the shallop round, and drive it far,
Into blue reaches of the northern seas.
But when his swoon was o'er, Sir Galahad knew
A gracious savour lingered on his lip,
A sense of peace and pardon filled his soul.

Charles Mackay.

1814—1889.

CHARLES MACKAY, poet and journalist, was born at Perth, on the 27th of March, 1814. His father was an officer in the Royal Artillery, sometime stationed at Woolwich, where, on the death of his mother, the young poet was placed under the care of the wife of an artillery sergeant. In childhood he began to write verses, and at thirteen years of age submitted some of them to Edward Irving, whose acquaintance he had made. Irving's encouragement favoured the boy's ambition, and led him to aspire to a life of letters. His father had planned for him a military career, and his uncle, Major-General Mackay, had offered to obtain for him an Indian Cadetship, but family differences arising, the military idea was given up, and young Mackay accepted a civil appointment. In 1834 he published his first volume of poems, and was fortunate enough to attract the attention of Mr. John Black, the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, who made him assistant sub-editor to that journal. This was indeed a happy appointment for the young *litterateur*, giving him introductions, which led to the friendship of Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray, Harrison Ainsworth, Douglas Jerrold, Wordsworth, Rogers, Campbell, Hood, and others. Mackay remained on the *Chronicle* for nine years, and during

that period published his second volume of poems. In 1844 he left the *Chronicle*, and became editor of the *Glasgow Argus*, which office he held for three years. During his stay in Glasgow he wrote much on national education, and was made an LL.D. of that University. On his return to London he was engaged as foreign leader writer to the *Telegraph*, a short-lived journal started by Mr. Herbert Ingram, the proprietor of the *Illustrated London News*. On the death of the daily he accepted the editorial chair of the famous pictorial weekly, which he occupied until 1860. A notable feature of his editorial career in this connection was his association with Sir Henry Bishop in the revival of our national songs and melodies. A good song writer himself, Mackay took a keen interest in our national minstrelsy, and at this time as well as later rendered valuable service to the cause of national song. In 1857 he visited the United States, and spent some time in lecturing on poetry in various parts of the country. On the death of Mr. Ingram in 1860, Charles Mackay retired from the editorial chair of the *News*, and founded the *London Review*. Two years later he went to New York to represent the *Times*, remaining there during the continuance of the Civil War, and returning to England in 1865. Throughout his career Charles Mackay was a most energetic and prolific worker,—poems, novels, essays, critical articles, lectures, dissertations on literary antiquities, papers on philology, whether in French or English, coming apparently with equal facility from his pen. His “History of Popular Delusions” was one of his most popular books, and his “Gaelic Etymology of the Languages of Western Europe,” and his “Recreations Gauloises

et Origines Françaises" were his most important contributions to philological science. A frequent contributor to journalistic literature, his "Voices from the Crowd," which appeared in the *Daily News*, are still remembered, while his articles in the *Nineteenth Century* on "Burns and Beranger," and on "Boileau and Pope," show him to have been an able and eloquent critic. He died December 24th, 1889.

Like those of many other poets, his longer efforts in verse have lost whatever interest they may have once excited, but his songs and shorter poems still give lyrical expression to popular feeling, sentiment, and philosophy. These are characterised by a clear resonant ring, and animated by a healthy, liberal spirit. "John Littlejohn" is of the happiest class of popular verse, and "Tubal Cain" swings along and drives home its points as with the sweep and force of the blacksmith's hammer. "Louise on the Door-step" reaches genuine pathos, and "The Three Preachers" is as a trumpet call to the ranks of truth and progress. The "Ivy in the Dungeon," which unfortunately we have not space enough to quote, is a good illustration of how a moral lesson may be enforced in verse without any sacrifice of the poetry of the idea; and "Under the Holly Bough," with which we conclude our notice, a happy example of the genial and catholic spirit which so often informs the poet's verse:—

"Ye who have scorned each other,
Or injured friend or brother,
In this fast-fading year;
Ye who, by word or deed,
Have made a kind heart bleed,
Come gather here.

“Let sinned against, and sinning,
Forget their strife’s beginning,
And join in friendship now,
Be links no longer broken,
Be sweet forgiveness spoken
Under the holly bough.

“Ye who have loved each other,
Sister and friend and brother,
In this fast-fading year ;
Mother and sire and child,
Young man and maiden mild,
Come gather here ;

“And let your hearts grow fonder,
As memory shall ponder
Each past unbroken vow.
Old love and younger wooing
Are sweet in the renewing,
Under the holly bough.

“Ye who have nourished sadness,
Estranged from hope and gladness,
In this fast-fading year ;
Ye with o’erburthened mind,
Made aliens from your kind,
Come gather here.

“Let not the useless sorrow
Pursue you night and morrow ;
If e’er you hoped, hope now—
Take heart, uncloud your faces,
And join in our embraces
Under the holly bough.”

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS, SONGS, AND BALLADS.

CHARLES MACKAY.

I.—THE THREE PREACHERS.

THERE are three preachers, ever preaching,
Fill'd with eloquence and power :—
One is old, with locks of white,
Skinny as an anchorite ;
And he preaches every hour
With a shrill fanatic voice,
And a bigot's fiery scorn :—
“ BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations ;
Man to misery is born !
Born to drudge, and sweat, and suffer—
Born to labour and to pray ;
BACKWARD ! ye presumptuous nations—
Back !—be humble and obey ! ”

The second is a milder preacher ;
Soft he talks as if he sung ;
Sleek and slothful is his look,
And his words, as from a book,
Issue glibly from his tongue.
With an air of self-content,
High he lifts his fair white hands :
“ STAND YE STILL ! ye restless nations ;
And be happy, all ye lands !
Fate is law, and law is perfect ;
If ye meddle, ye will mar ;
Change is rash, and ever was so :
We are happy as we are.”

Mightier is the younger preacher,
Genius flashes from his eyes ;
And the crowds who hear his voice,
Give him, while their souls rejoice,
Throbbing bosoms for replies.
Awed they listen, yet elated,
While his stirring accents fall :—
“ FORWARD ! ye deluded nations,
Progress is the rule of all :
Man was made for healthful effort ;
Tyranny has crush’d him long ;
He shall march from good to better,
And do battle with the wrong.

“ Standing still is childish folly,
Going backward is a crime :
None should patiently endure
Any ill that he can cure ;
ONWARD ! keep the march of Time.
Onward ! while a wrong remains
To be conquer’d by the right ;
While Oppression lifts a finger
To affront us by his might ;
While an error clouds the reason
Of the universal heart,
Or a slave awaits his freedom,
Action is the wise man’s part

“ Lo ! the world is rich in blessings :
Earth and Ocean, flame and wind,
Have unnumber’d secrets still,
To be ransack’d when you will,
For the service of mankind

Science is a child as yet,
 And her power and scope shall grow,
 And her triumphs in the future
 Shall diminish toil and woe ;
 Shall extend the bounds of pleasure
 With an ever-widening ken,
 And of woods and wildernesses
 Make the homes of happy men.

“ONWARD!—there are ills to conquer,
 Daily wickedness is wrought,
 Tyranny is swoln with Pride,
 Bigotry is deified,
 Error intertwined with Thought.
 Vice and Misery ramp and crawl ;—
 Root them out, their day has pass’d ;
 Goodness is alone immortal ;
 Evil was not made to last :
 ONWARD ! and all Earth shall aid us
 Ere our peaceful flag be furl’d.”—
 And the preaching of this preacher
 Stirs the pulses of the world.

II.—O YE TEARS!

O YE tears ! O ye tears ! that have long refused to
 flow,
 Ye are welcome to my heart,—thawing, thawing like
 the snow ;
 I feel the hard clod soften, and the early snow-drops
 spring,
 And the healing fountains gush, and the wildernesses
 sing.

O ye tears ! O ye tears ! I am thankful that ye run ;
Though ye trickle in the darkness, ye shall glitter in
the sun ;
The rainbow cannot shine if the rain refuse to fall,
And the eyes that cannot weep are the saddest eyes
of all.

O ye tears ! O ye tears ! till I felt you on my cheek,
I was selfish in my sorrow, I was stubborn, I was
weak :
Ye have given me strength to conquer, and I stand
erect and free,
And I know that I am human by the light of
sympathy.

O ye tears ! O ye tears ! ye relieve me of my pain ;
The barren rock of pride has been stricken once
again ;
Like the rock that Moses smote, amid Horeb's burn-
ing sand,
It yields the flowing water to make gladness in the
land.

There is light upon my path, there is sunshine in
my heart,
And the leaf and fruit of life shall not utterly
depart.
Ye restore to me the freshness and the bloom of
long ago—
O ye tears ! Ye happy tears ! I am thankful that ye
flow !

III.—TUBAL CAIN.

OLD Tubal Cain was a man of might
In the days when Earth was young ;
By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung ;
And he lifted high his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,
Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers,
As he fashioned the sword and spear.
And he sang—" Hurra for my handiwork !
Hurra for the spear and sword !
Hurra for the hand that shall wield them well,
For he shall be king and lord ! "

To Tubal Cain came many a one,
As he wrought by his roaring fire,
And each one prayed for a strong steel blade
As the crown of his desire :
And he made them weapons sharp and strong,
Till they shouted loud for glee,
And gave him gifts of pearl and gold,
And spoils of the forest free.
And they sang—" Hurra for Tubal Cain,
Who hath given us strength anew !
Hurra for the smith, hurra for the fire,
And hurra for the metal true ! "

But a sudden change came o'er his heart,
Ere the setting of the sun,
And Tubal Cain was filled with pain
For the evil he had done ;

He saw that men, with rage and hate,
Made war upon their kind,
That the land was red with blood they shed
In their lust for carnage, blind.
And he said—"Alas! that ever I made,
Or that skill of mine should plan,
The spear and the sword for men whose joy
Is to slay their fellow man."

And for many a day old Tubal Cain
Sat brooding o'er his woe ;
And his hand forebore to smite the ore
And his furnace smouldered low.
But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
And a bright courageous eye,
And bared his strong right arm for work,
While the quick flames mounted high.
And he sang—"Hurra for my handicraft!"
And the red sparks lit the air ;
"Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made;"
And he fashioned the first ploughshare.

And men, taught wisdom from the past,
In friendship joined their hands,
Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
And ploughed the willing lands ;
And sang—"Hurra for Tubal Cain!
Our staunch good friend is he ;
And for the ploughshare and the plough
To him our praise shall be.
But while Oppression lifts its head,
Or a tyrant would be lord,
Though we may thank him for the Plough,
We'll not forget the Sword!"

IV.—LOUISE ON THE DOOR-STEP.

HALF-PAST three in the morning !
And no one in the street
But me, on the sheltering door-step
Resting my weary feet :
Watching the rain-drops patter
And dance where the puddles run,
As bright in the flaring gaslight
As dewdrops in the sun.
There's a light upon the pavement—
It shines like a magic glass,
And there are faces in it
That look at me and pass.
Faces—ah ! well remembered
In the happy Long Ago,
When my garb was white as lilies,
And my thoughts as pure as snow.
Faces ! ah, yes ! I see them—
One, two, and three—and four—
That come in the gust of tempests,
And go on the winds that bore.
Changeful and evanescent,
They shine 'mid storm and rain,
Till the terror of their beauty
Lies deep upon my brain.
One of them frowns ; *I* know him,
With his thin long snow-white hair,—
Cursing his wretched daughter
That drove him to despair.
And the other, with wakening pity
In her large tear-streaming eyes,
Seems as she yearned toward me,
And whispered "Paradise."

They pass,—they melt in the ripples,
And I shut mine eyes, that burn,
To escape another vision
That follows where'er I turn—
The face of a false deceiver
That lives and lies ; ah, me !
Though I see it in the pavement,
Mocking my misery !

They are gone !—all three !—quite vanished !
Let nothing call them back !
For I've had enough of phantoms,
And my heart is on the rack !
God help me in my sorrow ;
But *there*,—in the wet, cold stone,
Smiling in heavenly beauty,
I see my lost, mine own !

There, on the glimmering pavement,
With eyes as blue as morn,
Floats by the fair-haired darling
Too soon from my bosom torn.
She clasps her tiny fingers—
She calls me sweet and mild,
And says that my God forgives me
For the sake of my little child.

I will go to her grave to-morrow,
And pray that I may die ;
And I hope that my God will take me
Ere the days of my youth go by.
For I am old in anguish,
And long to be at rest,
With my little babe beside me,
And the daisies on my breast.

Philip James Bailey.

1816.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY, "the author of 'Festus,'" was born at Nottingham on April 22nd, 1816. His father, the late Mr. Thomas Bailey, also a native of the same town, and himself an author of considerable local repute, was for some time (1845 to 1852) the proprietor and editor of *The Nottingham Mercury*. He also issued several publications both in poetry and prose, among the former being "What is Life?" "The Carnival of Death," a poem in honour of a high local and national celebrity, "Ireton," and "The Advent of Charity." His most important prose work, "The Annals of Nottinghamshire," contained a vast amount of local history and general information, political, social, and antiquarian. Philip James Bailey early manifested a taste for literature which was warmly encouraged and thoughtfully cultivated and directed by his father. After going through the usual course of general and classical studies in Nottingham under the best masters there, he matriculated at Glasgow in his sixteenth year, and zealously followed out the somewhat severe intellectual training prescribed in the logical and ethical classes respectively under their accomplished professors.

Whether working at the University or elsewhere his studies were determinately, although tacitly

directed towards the one object of his life, the development of his faculties as a poet. Habitual converse with speculations moral and metaphysical, embracing the whole orbit of mental philosophy, ancient and modern, both when at college and many years subsequently,—indeed throughout his life,—became with him an all-absorbing passion; and this blending with an impressionable nature, and a retiring and contemplative disposition, imparted no doubt ultimately that tinge of transcendentalism to his poetry which, sobered by those serious associations to which he had from his earliest years been accustomed at home, forms one of its chief and especial charms in the estimation of the most thoughtful of his admirers.

Not caring to enter upon a course of Scottish Presbyterian theology, he quitted college before completing his curriculum, and without a degree, becoming in 1835 a member of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn. After some wanderings in Scotland and France, he retired to Basford, where, in the charming seclusion of an old-fashioned English house, he first conceived the poem of "Festus" in 1836, writing and rewriting it with indefatigable care and elaboration during the years that preceded its publication in 1839. It appeared anonymously, but was warmly welcomed by many of the foremost English thinkers of the day; whilst in America its reception was yet more hearty and outspoken. The voice, indeed, of America, unaffected by the narrow prejudices and routine and too often cynical habits of English criticism, has often proved equivalent to the verdict of posterity. Since that date "Festus" has passed through eleven editions in Eng-

land, besides thirty in America, and in it is comprised the far greater portion of Philip Bailey's literary life. At various intervals he has published other minor poems; "The Angel World" in 1850, the "Mystic" and the "Spiritual Legend" five years later, and in 1868 the "Universal Hymn," most of which are now mainly incorporated with "Festus." From 1864 to 1876 he lived chiefly in Jersey, making excursions on different occasions to Switzerland; France, where he was at the outburst of the Franco-German war; Italy in 1872, at the moment of the great eruption of Vesuvius that year, and which he had the unique good fortune, poetically, to witness; and twice to Brittany, the Pays Druidique, etc. On his return to England he resided near Ilfracombe, until 1885, when he took up his residence at Blackheath, where in 1889 he brought out his Jubilee edition of "Festus." Two works of a different character to those quoted have also issued from Mr. Bailey's pen: "The Age," a satire published in 1858; and, in 1861, a brief political treatise relative to the "International Policy of the Great Powers."

It is now necessary to deal a little more at large with the poem of "Festus." So long as the borderland between religion and philosophy keeps expanding, as it has recently done, in the latter direction, the hold of this remarkable poem on the world of poetical readers is not likely to be shaken. In the breadth of its theological views, in the liberality of its doctrinal theories, in those positions respecting the remedial character of future punishments, and the applicability of Divine mercy to all responsible and erring but rational spirits, capable therefore of penitence, and, if of penitence, then

ultimately of return to good, as well as the progress of the soul after death through various probationary spheres, "Festus" holds no insignificant place amongst the poetical representatives of the religious spirit and belief of the day.

It was fitting for the poet, prior to the publication of the Jubilee edition, to give in a preface expression to the ideas and thoughts that had governed him during the whole career of the poem. If, on the one hand, it tends to suppress speculative criticism, on the other it states with authority which can never be questioned the objects and hopes of the author. This preface will be presently dealt with, but meanwhile it is only fitting to give expression to the opinion of one critical reader, the dramatist Westland Marston, as to its power as a poem. The author of "The Patrician's Daughter" says of it, "I know no poem in any language that can be compared with it in copiousness and variety of imagery. The universe is as rife with symbols to this poet as it is with facts to the common observer. His illustrations, sometimes bold and towering as the mountains, are, at others, soft, subtle, and delicate as the mists that veil their summits. But, better than this, with a truth, force, and simplicity seldom paralleled, we have here disclosed the very inmost life of a sincere and energetic mind. Metaphysical and psychological speculations are, so to speak, actualized and verified by the earnestness and passion of the author. There are few books in which what is so profound in its essence is rendered so familiar in its exposition. There is an universe in its entirety. It abounds in thoughts so beautiful, and sentiments so exquisite in their simple truth, that we should not only

excuse the occasional extravagances, but they might almost be felt as a relief from what would otherwise be overpowering in its beauty." "Festus," in the language of its author in the preface mentioned, "has been taken to be a sketch of world life, and is a summary of its combined moral and physical conditions estimated on a theory of spiritual things, opposed as far as possible to that of the partialist, pessimist, and despairing sceptic, the belief of the misbeliever, so prevalent in our time; not only in regard to the creation, government, and administration of the world by Divine providence, but in its views as to the origin of the so-called mystery of moral evil."

It is the peculiarity of "Festus," and one which most endears it to all endowed with a searching and philosophical spirit, that while other poems, some of world-wide repute, content themselves with raising questions and suggesting problems of an ethical and metaphysical character, it is just these which "Festus" solves; whether the matter involved relates to the so-called mystery of moral evil, and the reconciliation of its existence with the providential operations of a benevolent Deity, all wise and all powerful; to the unity and infinite personality of the Divinity, and the identity of our moral law, the same in every place throughout the rational universe; to the reconciliation of everlasting progress, in the case of the finite intelligence, with the enjoyment of unbounded bliss in its union with the source of all felicity; to the correlation of all virtues with the moral attributes of the sole and infinitely perfect Being, the Creator of all life; or, indeed, to a nameless variety of other topics, which it is at

once impossible and needless to specify. In its conclusions it is almost the antithesis of the "Prometheus Unbound" of Shelley, who beside glorifying to the full that lofty and inspiring conclusion, as he supposed it to be, that there was no God, no soul, and no immortality, completes his idea of human happiness as realizable in this world in the representation of a life without law, social, civil, or moral; consequently a life of utter anarchy.

In its long career the poem has undergone some change; indeed, as the author says, "In the course of years it becomes almost inevitable, in the case of a living writer, that some things shall have been added, some things, for sundry reasons, varied, and some things taken away." We do not think it necessary for our purpose to describe these changes, particularly as the poet has himself indicated them; but it may be said truly that they have left the work, as a whole, a much more finished composition, more complete and better proportioned, than it was originally. Regarding its structure, the poet tells us that "the poem will be found, through all its semicentury of scenes, one continuous whole, resolving itself, upon examination, not into books or acts, but into twelve or more groups, celestial, astral, interstellar, terrestrial, solar, planetary, and one other, the sphere of the infernals; that is to say, into so many clusters of sections subordinated into seven classes, finally reducible into three, heavenly, firmamental, earthly; throughout variously distributed." With what power the poet pursues his story cannot be stated in a brief notice like the present; but it is felt in every scene, and the reader's faculties are often arrested by reflections

on the author's grasp of the highest and most difficult problems. Throughout all, as a silver thread through the dark woof of doubt and perplexity, runs the idea that God, having righteously made man responsible for his deeds, will still not render a creature of finite faculties, weak as regards active forces, or powers of passion, amenable to fines infinite, and out of all possible proportion to their causes. In contradistinction to the pantheism, the nature worship, and the man worship of our times, the poet strives to present the idea of the Great Spirit in whom we live, and move, and have our being, infinite everywhere and always present to us. Around the Great Spirit, the God of our intelligence, fear, and love, are grouped a mighty hierarchy, loyal naturally, and by all-sufficient reason, to the bounteous Creator ; and as the human expression of this hierarchy is outlined the person and career of Festus and his companion characters, sufficient to vitalize the framework of the pageant, and demark it from the range of simple allegory. It is in this human expression of the poem that consists its abiding charm. This relationship of man and woman with the world beyond them, which we see and which we feel to be a part of ourselves, and to which we belong ; this oneness of the human life and the human soul, and, as one writer has said, "a soul gifted, tried, buffeted, beguiled, stricken, purified, redeemed, pardoned, and triumphant," create hopes, and inspire beliefs, as the reader pushes forward through the story, which perhaps no other poem can. The great study of the poet's life has been, in his own words, "to have done his best to favour a simple creed which comprises in its

consecrated elements a belief in the benignant providence of God, in the immortality of the soul, in the harmonized gospel of faith and reason combined, and in the just, discriminative, and equitable judgment of the spirit after death by Deity." How he has executed his task, how he has foregone most of the incitements that are dear to mankind within his grasp, how he has laboured to present one picture, his life bears witness. The thought that he has not striven in vain is his blessing and help, and comforts him for the years that may yet be his own.

J. HENRY BROWN.

FESTUS.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

I.

THE DEVIL'S SERMON.

(FROM BOOK V.)

COME, I'll unroll your hearts and read them to ye.
'Tis a long strip, Death's ritual. Hear not less.
To say ye live is but to say ye have souls,
That ye have paid for them, and mean to play them,
Till some brave pleasure wins the golden stake,
And rakes it up to death as to a bank.
Ye live and die on what your souls will fetch ;
And all are of different prices : therefore hell
Cannot well bargain for mankind in gross ;
But each soul must be purchased, one by one.
This it is makes men rate themselves so high :
While truly ye are worth little : but to God
Ye are worth more than to yourselves. By sin
Ye wreak your spite against God ; that ye know ;
And knowing, will it. But I pray, I beg,
Act with some smack of justice to your Maker,
If not unto yourselves. Do ! It is enough
To make the very Devil chide mankind ;
Such baseness, such unthankfulness ! Why he
Thanks God he is no worse. You don't do that.
I say be just to God. Leave off these airs :
Know your place ; speak to God ; and say, for once,
Go first, Lord ; take your finger off your eye.
It blocks the universe and God from sight.
Think ye your souls are worth nothing to God ?
Are they so small ? What can be great with God ?
The sun and moon he wears on either arm,
Seals of his sovereignty. What now, huge men !

What will ye weigh against the Lord? Yourselves?
Bring out your balance: get in, man by man:
Add earth, heaven, hell, the universe; that's all.
God puts his finger in the other scale,
And up we bounce, a bubble. Nought is great
Nor small, with God—for none but he can make
The atom imperceptible, and none
But he can make a world: he counts the orbs,
He counts the atoms of the universe,
And makes both equal; both are infinite.
Giving God honour, never underrate
Yourselves: after him ye are everything.
But mind! God's more than everything; he is God.
And what of me? No, us? no! I mean the Devil?
Why see ye not he goes before both you
And God? Men say, as proud as Lucifer;
Pray who would not be proud with such a train?
Hath he not all the honour of the earth?
Why Mammon sits before a million hearths,
Where God is bolted out from every house.
He'll not forget that. Some day there'll be haply,
A pretty general eviction. Then,
Mind me, he'll break your bars and burst your doors,
Which slammed against him once, and turn ye out,
Roofless and shivering, 'neath the doom-storm; heaven
Shall crack above ye like a bell in fire,
And bury all beneath its shining shards.
He calls, ye hear not. Lo! he comes—ye see not.
No; ye are deaf as a dead adder's ear:
No; ye are blind as never bat was blind,
With a burning, bloodshot blindness of the heart;
A swimming, swollen, senselessness of soul.
Listen. Whom love ye most? Why, him to whom
Ye in your turn are dearest. Need I name?

Oh no ! but all are devils to themselves ;
And every man his own great foe. Hell gets
Only the gleanings ; earth hath the full wain ;
And hell is merry at its harvest home.
But ye are generous to sin, and grudge
The gleaners nothing ; ask them, push them in.
Let not an ear, a grain of sin be lost ;
Gather it, grind it up ; it is our bread :
We should be ashamed to waste the gifts of God.
Why is the world so mad ? Why runs it thus
Raving and howling round the universe ?
Because the Devil bit it from the birth !
The fault is all with him. Fear nothing, friends ;
It is fear which beds the far to-come with fire,
As the sun does the west : but the sun sets ;
Well : still ye tremble—tremble, first at light,
Then darkness. Tremble ! ye dare not believe.
No, cowards ! sooner than believe ye would die ;
Die with the black lie flapping on your lips,
Like the soot-flake upon a burning bar.
Be merry, happy if ye can : think never
Of him who slays your souls, nor him who saves.
There is time enough for that when ye are a-dying.
Keep your old ways ; it matters not this once.
Be brave ; ye are not men whom meat and wine
Serve to remind but of the sacrament ;
To whom sweet shapes and tantalizing smiles
Bring up the Devil and the ten commandments ;
And so on. But I said the world must end.
I see some old men 'mong ye, and they know,
Discomfortably enough, the heart in age,
Lower and lower, like the wintering sun,
Sets daily, and is troubled more to rise.
Let them be rather gay to miss earth's end.

I am sorry ; it is such a pleasant world ;
With all its faults it is perfect—to a fault ;
And you, of course, end with it. Now how long
Will the world take to die ? I know ye place
Great faith upon death-bed repentances ;
The suddener the better. I know ye often
Begin to think of praying and repenting ;
But second thoughts come and ye are worse than
ever ;

As over new white snow a filthy thaw.
Ye do amaze me verily. How long
Will ye take heart on your own wickedness,
And God's forbearance ? Have ye cast it up ?
Come, now ; the year, and month, day, hour, and
minute,

Sin's golden cycle ? Know ye, pray, how long
Exactly, heaven will grant ye ; how long God,—
Who when he had slain the world and wasted it,
Hung up his bow in heaven, as in his hall
A warrior after battle—will yet bear
Your contumely and scorn of his best gifts,—
Man's mockery of man ? But never mind !
Some of us are magnificently good,
And hold the head up high, like a giraffe ;
You, in particular, and you ; and you.
Good men are here and there, I know ; but then
You must excuse me if I mention this,
My duty is to tell it you ; the world
Like a black block of marble, jagged with white,
As with a vein of lightning petrified,
Looks blacker than without such ; looks, in truth,
So gross the heathen, gross the Christian too,
Like the original darkness of void space,
Hardened. Instead of justice, love, and grace,

Each worth to man the mission of a God,
Injustice, hate, uncharitableness,
Triequal reign round earth, hell's trinity, sure.
Ye think ye never can be bad enough ;
Nay, as ye sink in sin ye rise in hope.
And let the worst come to the worst, you say,
There always will be time to turn ourselves,
And cry for half an hour or so to God :
Salvation, sure, is not so very hard ;
It need not take one long ; and half an hour
Is quite as much as we can spare for it.
We have no time for pleasures. Business ! business !
No ! ye shall perish suddenly and unsaved.
The world shall stand still with a rending jar,
As though it struck at sea ; or, as when once,
An arm Titanian, say not whose, but jogged
By earthquakes, wryed the pole, and o'er the dry
Poured competitive mains. The unsleepful sea,
Mooning and bellowing now round caverned coasts,
Now, drawing hard through thirty thousand teeth,
Upon the shingly shore, his pauseful breath,
Like some monogamous monster which hath lost,
Poor fool ! his mate ; and every rock-hole searched
By torch of foam-light, dogs her steps with sad,
Superfluous faithfulness, shall rest at last,
Nor wist which way to turn him ; ebb nor flow
No more to choose. All elements as though smote
With reasonablest disloyalty to man's
Usurpful claim, their constrained suit shall cease,
And natural service : men their mightiest wont,
Their meanest use and craft. The halls where parle
The heads of nations shall be dumb with death.
The priest shall dipping, die : can man save man ?
Is water God ? The counsellor, wise fool,

Drop down amid his quirks and sacred lies,
The judge, while dooming unto death some wretch,
Shall meet at once his own death, doom and judge.
The doctor, watch in hand and patient's pulse,
Shall feel his own heart cease its beats, and fall.
Professors shall spin out, and students strain
Their brains no more. Art, science, toil, shall cease,
Commerce. The ship shall her own plummet seek,
And sound the sea herself and depths of death.
At the first turn Death shall cut off the thief,
And dash the gold-bag in his yellow brain.
The gambler, reckoning gains, shall drop a piece :
Stoop down and there see death;—look up, there God.
The wanton, temporizing with decay,
And qualifying every line which vice
Writes bluntly on the brow, inviting scorn,
Shall pale through plastered red: and the loose low sot
See clear, for once, through his misty, o'erbrimmed eye.
The just, if there be any, die in prayer.
Death shall be everywhere among your marts ;
And giving bills which no man may decline—
Drafts upon hell one moment after date.
Then shall your outcries tremble amid the stars :
Terrors shall be about ye like a wind ;
And fears fall down upon ye like four walls.

II.

THE PRAYER OF FESTUS.

(FROM BOOK V.)

GRANT us, O God ! that in Thy holy love
The universal people of the world
May grow more great and happy every day ;
Mightier, wiser, humbler, too, towards Thee.

And that all ranks, all classes, callings, states
Of life, so far as such seem right to Thee,
May mingle into one, like sister trees,
And so in one stem flourish : that all laws
And powers of government be based and used
In good, and for the people's sake ;—that each
May feel himself of consequence to all,
And act as though all saw him ; that the whole,
The mass of every nation may so do
As is most worthy of the next to God ;
For a whole people's souls, each one worth more
Than a mere world of matter, make, combined,
A something godlike, something like to Thee.
We pray Thee for the welfare of all men.
Let monarchs who love truth and freedom feel
The happiness of safety, and respect
From those they rule, and guardianship from Thee.
Let them remember they are set on thrones
As representatives, not as substitutes,
Of nations, to implead with God and man.
Let tyrants who hate truth, or fear the free,
Know that to rule in slavery and error,
For the mere ends of personal pomp and power,
Is such a sin as doth deserve a hell
To itself sole. Let both remember, Lord !
They are but things like-natured with all nations ;
That mountains issue out of plains, and not
Plains out of mountains, and so likewise kings
Are of the people, not the people of kings.
And let all feel, the rulers and the ruled,
All classes and all countries, that the world
Is Thy great halidom ; that Thou art King,
Lord, only owner and possessor. Grant
That nations may now see, it is not kings,

Nor priests, they need fear so much as themselves ;
That if they keep but true to themselves, and free,
Sober, enlightened, godly ; mortal men
Become impassible as air ; one great
And indestructible substance as the sea.
Let all on thrones and judgment-seats reflect
How dreadful Thy revenge through nations is
On those who wrong them ; but do Thou grant, Lord,
That when wrongs are to be redressed, such may
Be done with mildness, speed, and firmness ; not
With violence or hate, whereby one wrong
Translates another ; both to Thee abhorrent.
The bells of time are ringing changes fast.
Grant, Lord ! that each fresh peal may usher in
An era of advancement, that each change
Prove an effectual lasting, happy gain.
And we beseech Thee, overrule, O God !
All civil contests to the good of all ;
All party and religious differences
To honourable ends, whether secured
Or lost ; and let all strife, political
Or social, spring from conscientious aims,
And have a generous, self-ennobling end,
Man's good, and Thine own glory in view always.
The best may then fail and the worst succeed,
Alike with honour. We beseech Thee, Lord !
For bodily strength, but more especially
For the soul's health and safety. We entreat Thee
In Thy great mercy to decrease our wants,
And add autumnal increase to the comforts
Which tend to keep men innocent, and load
Their hearts with thanks to Thee as trees in bearing :
The blessings of friends, families, and homes,
And kindnesses of kindred. And we pray

That men may rule themselves in faith in God,
In charity to each other, and in hope
Of their own soul's salvation : that the mass,
The millions in all nations, may be trained,
From their youth upwards, in a nobler mode,
To loftier and more liberal ends. We pray
Above all things, Lord ! that all men be free
From bondage, whether of the mind or body ;
The bondage of religious bigotry,
And bald antiquity ; servility
Of thought or speech to rank and power ; be all
Free as they ought to be in mind and soul,
As well as by state-birth right ; and that Mind,
Time's giant pupil, may right soon attain
Majority, and speak and act for himself.
Incline Thou to our prayers, and grant, O Lord !
That all may have enough, and some safe mean
Of worldly goods and honours, by degrees,
Take place, if practicable, in the fitness
And fulness of Thy time. And we beseech Thee
That truth no more be gagged, nor conscience dun-
Nor science be impeached of godlessness ; [geoned,
Nor faith be circumscribed, which as to Thee,
And the soul's self affairs, is infinite ;
But that all men may have due liberty
To speak an honest mind, in every land ;
Encouragement to study, leave to act
As conscience orders. We entreat Thee, Lord !
For thy Son's sake, for total man's, in whose
Name first spake he, prophet supreme of earth,
As man's son thine, to take away reproach
Of all kinds from thy church ; and all temptation
Of pomp or power political, that none
May err in the end for which they were appointed

To any of its orders, low or high ;
And no ambition, of a worldly cast,
Leaven the love of souls unto whose care
They feel propelled by thy most holy spirit.
Be every Church established, Lord ! in truth.
Let all who preach the word, by the word live,
In moderate estate ; and in thy Church,—
One, universal, and invisible,
World-wards, yet manifest unto itself,
May it seem good, dear Saviour, in thy sight,
That orders be distinguished, not by wealth,
But piety and power of teaching souls.
Equalize labour, Lord ! and recompense.
Let not a hundred humble pastors starve,
In this or any land of Christendom,
While one or two, impalaced, mitred, throned
And banqueted, burlesque, if not blaspheme
The holy penury of the Son of Man ;
The fastings, the footwanderings, and the preachings
Of Christ and His first followers. Oh that the Son
Might come again ! There should be no more war,
No more want, no more sickness ; with a touch,
He should cure all disease, and with a word,
All woe ; and with a look to heaven, a prayer,
Provide bread for a million at a time.
But till that perfect advent, grant us, Lord !
That all good institutions, orders, claims,
Charitably proposed, or in the aid
Of Thy divine foundation, may much prosper,
And more of them be raised and nobly filled ;
That thy word may be taught throughout all lands
And save souls daily to the thrones of heaven !
Enriched, empowered, emboldened by thy Spirit,
We dare to ask for all things in Thy name ;

We dare to pray for all that live or die.
Man dies to man ; but all to Thee, God, live.
We pray Thee, therefore, for the general dead ;
Man's universal race, extinct in flesh.
But in the spirit immortal ; not alone
For those who died unwitting of all truth,
But whose souls opening after like a flower
In finer air, may compass more than we ;
Not only for the sage, saint, seer of old
Who saw Thy truth but darkly, felt Thy light
But feebly, yet unfaltering, held the faith,
That the good God who made all, all decrees,
Allots and blesses all, in this life, man
May trust like lovingly for life to come.
Not only therefore for the wise of yore,
But for the mass unwise of all times, now,
Passed and to come ; who boast not of Thy love,
Nor glory in Thy name ; but spurn Thy law,
Nor keep Thy precepts ; for the wicked man
Who hates Thy righteousness ; and for the good
Who his own preacheth ; for the scorner who
Despiseth Thy humility, most high !
The ignorant who Thy providence misdoubts ;
The dark inverted soul who sees not Thee ;
The bigot who maligns Thee, Lord ! for all,
Quick, dead we ask Thy boundless mercy, more
Than all sin, all defect, as infinite
O'erlaps all finites. But by us be none
Condemned. Shall culprits take the judge's seat ?
Christ's lesson of forgiveness mote not we
Forget. If they who wrought earth's crowning crime
Were of his intercession worthy, Lord !
Of whom shall fellow-sinners, like ourselves,
Despair ? To whom shall mercy hope deny ?

And we entreat Thee, that all men whom Thou
Hast gifted with great minds may love Thee well,
And praise Thee, for their powers, and use them most
Humbly and holily, and, lever-like,
Act but in lifting up the mass of mind
About them ; knowing well that they shall be
Questioned by Thee of deeds the pen hath done,
Or caused, or glozed ; inspire them with delight
And power to treat of noble themes and things,
Worthily, and to leave the low and mean ;
Things born of vice or day-lived fashion, in
Their naked native folly : make them know
Fine thoughts are wealth, for the right use of which
Men are and ought to be accountable,
If not to Thee, to those they influence.
Grant this, we pray thee, and that all who read
Or utter noble thoughts may make them theirs,
And thank God for them, to the betterment
Of their succeeding life ; that all who lead
The general sense and taste, too apt, perchance,
To be led, keep in mind the mighty good
They may achieve, and are in conscience bound,
And duty, to attempt unceasingly
To compass. Grant us, all-maintaining Sire !
That all the great mechanic aids to toil
Man's skill hath formed, found, rendered, whether used
In multiplying works of mind, or aught
To obviate the thousand wants of life,
May much avail to human welfare now ;
And in all ages henceforth and for ever.
Let their effect be, Lord ! to lighten labour,
And give more room to mind ; and leave the poor
Some time for self-improvement. Let them not
Be forced to grind the bones out of their arms

For bread, but have some space to think and feel
Like moral and immortal creatures. God !
Have mercy on them till such time shall come ;
Look Thou with pity on all lesser crimes,
Thrust on men almost when devoured by want,
Wretchedness, ignorance, and outcast life.
Have mercy on the rich, too, who pass by
The means they hold at hand to fill their minds
With serviceable knowledge for themselves,
And fellows ; and support not the good cause
Of the world's better future. Oh, reward
All such who do, with peace of heart, and power
For greater good. Have mercy, Lord ! on each
And all, for all men need it equally.
May peace, and industry, and commerce, weld
Into one land all nations of the world,
Rekinning those the deluge once estranged.
Oh ! may all help each other in good things,
Mental and moral, and of bodily kind. . . .

But we pray

That all mankind may make one brotherhood,
And love and serve each other ; that all wars
And feuds die out of nations ; whether those
Whom the sun's hot light darkens, or ourselves
Whom he treats fairly, or the northern tribes
Whom ceaseless snows and starry winters blench ;
Savage or civilised, let every race,
Red, black, or white, olive, or tawny-skinned,
Settle in peace and swell the gathering hosts
Of the great Prince of Peace. Oh ! may the hour
Soon come when all false gods, false creeds, false
Allowed in Thy good purpose for a time, [prophets,
Demolished, the great world shall be at last
God's mercy-seat, the heritage of a pure

Humanity, made divine, and the possession
Of the spirit of comfort and wisdom ; shall all be
One land, one home, one friend, one faith, one law ;
Its ruler God, its practice righteousness,
Its life peace. For the one true faith we pray ;
There is but one in heaven, and there shall be
But one on earth, the same which is in heaven.
Prophecy is more true than history.
Grant us our prayers, we pray, Lord ! in the name
And for the sake of universal man,
Who Thee like Saviour as Creator, holds
Over all worlds, one holy Spirit God. Amen !

III.

HEAVEN.

(FROM BOOK VI.)

Is heaven a place where pearly streams
Glide over silver sand ?
Like childhood's rosy dazzling dreams
Of some far faëry land ?
Is heaven a clime where diamond dew
Glitter on fadeless flowers ?
And mirth and music ring aloud
From amaranthine bowers ?

Ah no ; not such, not such is heaven !
Surpassing far all these ;
Such cannot be the guerdon given
Man's wearied soul to please.
For saint and sinner here below
Such vain to be have proved :
And the pure spirit will despise
Whate'er the sense hath loved.

There we shall dwell with Sire and Son,
And with the mother-maid,
And with the Holy Spirit, one !
In glory like arrayed :
And not to one created thing
Shall our embrace be given ;
But all our joy shall be in God :
For only God is heaven.

IV.

MY GIPSY MAID.

(FROM BOOK X.)

My gipsy maid ! my gipsy maid !
I bless and curse the day
I lost the light of life, and caught
The grief which maketh grey.
Would that the light which blinded me
Had saved me on my way !

My night-haired love ! so sweet she was,
So fair and blithe was she ;
Her smile was brighter than the moon's,
Her eyes the stars might see.

I met her by her lane-spread tent,
Beside a moss-green stone,
And bade her make, not mock, my fate
My fortune was her own.
Thou art but yet a boy, she said,
And I a woman grown.

I am a man in love, I cried :
My heart was early manned :
She smiled, and only drooped her eyes,
And then let go my hand.

We stood a minute ; neither spake
What each must understand.

I told her, so she would be mine,
And follow where I went,
She straight should have a bridal bower
Instead of gipsy tent.

Or would she have me wend with her,
The world between should fall ;
For her I would fling up faith and friends,
And name, and fame, and all.

Her smile so bright froze while I spake,
And ice was in her eye ;
So near, it seemed ere touch her heart
I might have kissed the sky.

I said that if she loved to rule,
Or if she longed to reign,
I would make her Queen of every race
Which tearlike trod the world's sad face,
Or bleed at every vein.

She laid her finger on her lip,
And pointed to the sky ;
There is no God to come, she said :
Dost thou not fear to die ?

And what is God, I said, to thee ?
Thy people worship not.
The good, the happy, and the free,
She said, they need no God.

I looked until I lost mine eyes ;
I felt as though I were
In a dark cave, with one weak light—
The light of life—with her ;

And that was wasting fast away ;
I watched, but would not stir.

Again she took my hand in hers,
And read it o'er and o'er ;
Ah ! eyes so young, so sweet, I said,
Make as they read love's lore.

She held my hand—I trembled whilst—
For sorely soon I felt
She made the love-cross she foretold,
And all the woe she dealt.

Unhappy I should be, she said,
And young to death be given :
I told her I believed in her,
Not in the stars of heaven.

Hush ! we breathe heaven, she said, and bowed ;
And the stars speak through me.
Let heaven, I cried, take care of heaven !
I only care for thee.

She shrank ; I looked, and begged a kiss ;
I knew she had one for me ;
She would deny me not, she said,
But give me none would she.

My gipsy maid ! my gipsy maid !
'Tis three long years like this,
Since there I gave and got from thee
That meeting, parting kiss.

I saw the tears start in her eye,
And trickle down her cheek ;
Like falling stars across the sky,
Escaping from their Maker's eye :
I saw, but spared to speak.

Go, and forget ! she said, and slid
Below her lowly tent ;
I will not, cannot ;—hear me, girl !
She heard not, and I went.

At eve, by sunset, I was there,
The tent was there no more ;
The fire which warmed her flickered still --
The fire she sat before.

I stood by it, till through the dark
I saw not where it lay ;
And then like that my heart went out
In ashy grief and grey.

My gipsy maid ! my gipsy maid !
Oh ! let me bless this day ;
This day it was, I met thee first,
And yet it shall be and is cursed,
For thou hast gone away.

V.

POETS.

(FROM BOOK XV.)

POETS are all who love, who feel, great truths,
And tell them : and the truth of truths is love.
There was a time—oh, I remember well !
When, like a sea-shell with its sea-born strain,
My soul aye rang with the music of the lyre ;
And my heart shed its lore as leaves their dew---
A honey dew, and throve on what it shed.
All things I loved ; but song I loved in chief.
Imagination is the air of mind ;
Judgment its earth and memory its main ;

Passion its fire. I was at home in heaven.
Swift like, I lived above ; once touching earth,
The meanest thing might master me : long wings
But baffled. Still and still I harped on song.
Oh ! to create within the mind is bliss ;
And, shaping forth the lofty thought, or lovely,
We seek not, need not heaven : and when the thought,
Cloudy and shapeless, first forms on the mind,
Slow darkening into some gigantic make,
How the heart shakes with pride and fear, as heaven
Quakes under its own thunder ; or as might,
Of old, the mortal mother of a god,
When first she saw him lessening up the skies.
And I began the toil divine of verse,
Which, like a burning bush, doth guest a god.
But this was only wing-flapping—not flight ;
The pawing of a courser ere he win ;
Till by degrees, from wrestling with my soul,
I gathered strength to keep the fleet thoughts fast,
And made them bless me. Yes, there was a time
When tones of ancient song held eye and heart ;
Were the sole lore I recked of : the great bards
Of Greece, of Rome, and mine own master land,
And they who in the holy book are deathless ;
Men who have vulgarized sublimity,
And bought up truth for the nations ; held it whole ;
Men who have forged gods—uttered—made them pass
Sons of the sons of God, who, in olden days,
Did leave their passionless heaven for earth and
woman,
Brought an immortal to a mortal breast,
And, rainbow-like the sweet earth clasping, left
A bright precipitate of soul, which lives
Ever ; and through the lines of sullen men,

The dumb array of ages, speaks for all ;
Flashing by fits, like fire from an enemy's front ;
Whose thoughts, like bars of sunshine in shut rooms,
'Mid gloom, all glory, win the world to light ;
Who make their very follies like their souls ;
And like the young moon with a ragged edge,
Still, in their imperfection, beautiful ;
Whose weaknesses are lovely as their strengths,
Like the white nebulous matter between stars,
Which, if not light, at least is likest light ;
Men whom we build our love round like an arch
Of triumph, as they pass us on their way
To glory and to immortality ;
Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion,
Through every limb and the whole heart ; whose words
Haunt us, as eagles haunt the mountain air ;
Whose thoughts command all coming times and minds,
As from a tower, a warden ; fix themselves
Deep in the heart as meteor stones in earth,
Dropped from some higher sphere ; the words of gods,
And fragments of the undecmed tongues of heaven ;
Men who walk up to fame as to a friend,
Or their own house, which from the wrongful heir
They have wrested, from the world's hard hand and gripe ;
Men who, like death, all bone but all unarmed,
Have ta'en the giant world by the throat, and thrown him ;
And made him swear to maintain their name and fame
At peril of his life ; who shed great thoughts
As easily as an oak looseneth its golden leaves
In a kindly largesse to the soil it grew on ;
Whose names are ever on the world's broad tongue
Like sound upon the falling of a force ;
Whose words, if wingèd, are with angels' wings ;
Who play upon the heart as on a harp,

And make our eyes bright as we speak of them ;
Whose hearts have a look southward, and are open
To the whole noon of nature ; these I have waked,
And wept o'er night by night ; oft pondering thus :
Homer is gone ; and where is Jove ? and where
The rival cities seven ? His song outlives
Time, tower, and god—all that then was, save heaven.

VI.

THE TEMPLE OF THE ANGELS.

(FROM BOOK XXII.)

It was on a golden summer afternoon
Close by the grassy marge of a deep tarn,
Nigh half way up a mountain, that we stood,
I and the angel, when she told me this.
Above us rose the grey rocks, by our side
Forests of pines ; and the bright breaking wavelets
Came crowding dancing to the brink, like thoughts
To our lips. Before us shone the sun. We, peaked
As on some finial of the templed earth,
Peer round the infinite, far and near. Then I,
In ecstasie of thought : What need hath man
Of Eden passed, or Paradise to come,
When heaven is round us and within ourselves ?
God's peace, if anywhere, is surely here,
So boundless, so intense this sensible awe
Of nature 'neath his eye ; my soul, with thine,
With all, this hour consentient. Need, the world
Hath always, said Earth's Spirit, of loftier ends,
And meanings, than men's daily duties raise,
Howe'er well done ; of something holier, more
Akin with perfect, or to be, or gone,
To live by, as a pattern. Speak, I said.

The angel waved her hand e'er she began
As bidding earth be still. The birds ceased singing ;
The trees scarce breathing : and the lake smoothed
down

Each shining wrinklet ; and the wind drew off.
Time leaned him o'er his scythe, and listening, wept.
The circling sphere reined in her lightning pace
A moment. Ocean hushed his snow-maned steeds,
And a cloud hid the sun, as hides the face
A meditative hand. Then spake she thus.
Scarce had the sweet song of the morning stars,
Which rang through space at the first sign of life
Our earth gave, springing from the lap of God
On to her orbit ended, when from heaven
Came down a white-winged host, and eastwards,
where

Lay Eden's pleasaunce, first their pinions furled,
Alighting reverently. There, marked whate'er
Could be of good, as seemed, for man secured
By care divine, one brief debate in vow
Ended, that they on his behalf should build
Out of the riches of the soil around
A house to God. Here were the ruby rocks ;
And there in blocks the unquarried diamond lay ;
Topaz and emerald mountain, chrysoprase,
Sardonyx, sunstone, crystal, jacinth, stood
All light, with the stilly action of a star,
Or sea-based iceberg, blinding, to such sight
As men now boast, degenerate. These with tools
Tempered in heaven, the band angelic wrought,
Raised, fitted, polished, aptly imbedding first
The deep foundations of the holy dome
On bright and beaten gold. And all the while,
Songs to God's glory hovered around the work,

Like rainbows round a fountain. Day and night,
 Went on the hallowed labour till 'twas done :
 And yet but thrice the sun set ; more than thrice
 Rose not the moon ; so quick is work divine.
 Tower all, and roof and pinnacle, without,
 Were solid diamond. Based on chrysoprase,
 Gold green, of meek humility sign, the wall
 Opalline, emblem of all virtues ; soared
 Lustrous, with amethystine fruitage topped,
 Of temperance type ;—expressive these to man
 Of loftiest excellences and deepest needs
 In edifying his soul, the angels strove
 Symbolically to show how best, by these
 Of earthly things transpicuousest, men might
 The beauty of purity learn, the joy of peace
 With God, and bliss of perfectness in him,
 Sole source, sole end of worship, or in heaven
 Or earth, to all intelligences. Within,
 The dome was eye-blue sapphire, truth supreme,
 God's infinite unity, shadowing,—sown with stars
 And glittering spheres constellate. The wide floor
 One emerald, earthlike, veined with silver and gold,
 Marble and mineral, glowed, of every hue
 And marvellous quality. There, the meanest thing,
 Earth's most magnificent now, was gold, to God
 First due, to Him sole. Of one ruby shaped
 Stood the high altar, heartwise. Columned round
 With alabaster pure was all. And now,
 So high and bright it shone in the midday light,
 It could be seen from heaven. Upon their thrones
 The sun-eyed angels hailed it ; and there rose
 In heaven, a hurricane shout of angel-joy
 Which echoed for a thousand years. One dark,
 One solitary, and far foreseeing thought

Passed, like a planet's transit o'er the sun,
Across the brow of God. But soon He smiles
Earthwards on the angels, and that smile, to Himself
The temple consecrates. And they who built
Bowed themselves down, and worshipped in its walls.

•

Charles Harpur.

1817—1868.

“ And far and free this man of men,
With wintry hair and wasted feature,
Had fellowship with gorge and glen,
And with the loves and runes of nature.
Strange words of wind, and rhyme of rain,
And whispers from the inland fountains,
Are mingled in his various strain,
With leafy breaths of piny mountains.”

By the windy banks of the Tuross River, New South Wales (fit sepulchre for one whose songs were set to forest tunes, says a brother poet), enwrapped by the solemn solitudes he loved so well, lie the earthly remains of “the grey forefather of Australian song.” His giant frame and manly heart, long buffeted by the wild winds of misfortune, succumbed at last to the poignancy of a crushing grief on the death of a well-loved son, and the ruthless persecution of that fell destroyer, consumption. Henry Kendall, who made the poet’s acquaintance about six months before his death, says Harpur was then suffering from the earlier effects of the disease which terminated so fatally, and he appeared to be the almost empty shell of his former self.” The man was, indeed, a noble ruin—one that had been scorched and wasted as it were by fire. His face looked as if it had been through the hottest furnace of sorrow; indeed, it reminded one of Coleridge’s description of a countenance whose strange, almost

terrible, weariness told of agonies that had been, and were still to continue to be."

Charles Harpur was born at Windsor, New South Wales, in the year 1817, where he passed his youth, amidst wild scenery and rude society. His father, Joseph Harpur, was the master of the Government District School, and from him the poet received his education. He was a man of remarkable moral and intellectual qualities, and the poet always expressed for him the deepest filial love. His worldly position was not such as to enable him to bestow upon his son the leisure necessary for the completion of his education, and the full development of his powers; but the youthful necessity of self-reliance, the early contact with primal solitudes wild and vast, exercised a powerful influence upon his mind, and the lessons he learned in the "awful gorges where the tributary streams run into the vast precipice-encircled hollows of the Blue Mountains" were never forgotten, and were vividly reflected in his writings and upon his character. "He was," says Kendall, "a son of the forest, a man of the backwoods, a dweller in unquiet and uncouth country, and his songs are accordingly saturated with the strange fitful music of waste, broken-up places." Here was a singer whose genius was ripened, so to speak, by the sun and wind of outside wildernesses. As Tennyson's earlier songs are filled with the mournful monotonous music sweeping across the Lincolnshire fens, so Harpur's most characteristic poems incorporated with them the full, strong, *lawless* song of the Australian hills. Harpur loved the sense of vastness and spectral silences of the Australian forests, so that the pursuits into which he entered

as a young man—wood-cutting, hunting, exploring—were most congenial to his strong, hopeful, imaginative nature—

“ He loved the stormy mountain cones,
Where headlong winter leaps,
What time the gloomy swamp-oak groans,
And weeps and waits and weeps.”

He was induced, however, when about twenty-four years of age, to accept an appointment as accountant in the Post Office, Sydney. His leisure time was devoted to the literary labours he loved so well, and in the pursuit of which he made the acquaintance of Daniel Henry Deniehy (perhaps the greatest of Australian critics and essayists), Mr. Robert Lowe (afterwards Lord Sherbrooke), Mr. Nicol D. Stenhouse (a much-loved patron of the arts), and Mr. W. A. Duncan (editor of the *Australian* newspaper). These well-known Australians recognised and appreciated the abilities of the young poet, and the last-named gentleman encouraged him by giving publicity to his sonnets in the columns of the *Australian*. Mr. Duncan showed his friendship further by printing at his own cost five hundred copies of the poet's collected sonnets, and presenting the edition to the author as a gift. This little unpretentious volume of sonnets did not meet with a cordial reception. A discriminating few admired their beauty, but the bulk of the people had no time for culture, no time to bestow upon poetic effusions, even though presented to them by the hand of genius.

After a few years spent in Sydney, Harpur went to reside with his brother, Joseph J. Harpur (a man of literary tastes and performances), at his farm on

the Hunter River, near Singleton. Here some of his most beautiful verses were written, and here, it is said, he was subsequently married, in 1850, to Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. C. Doyle, of Eulengo, Jerry's Plains. Much happiness was the result of this marriage, and the days passed by laden with the fragrance of conjugal felicity, the charms of a reverent study of Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, till life seemed a sweet pastoral idyll, in which, as the poet himself sang, the Spirit of Love came

“To mellow the echoes that bleat from the hills,
Where the shepherds are folding their flocks by the rills;
In the wild woods to deepen the dove's gentle voice,
To live in all life, in all gladness rejoice.”

The dream was rudely shattered, for, after struggling hard to make his small sheep-station pay, he was compelled to relinquish his hopes of the peace of pastoral days, and in 1858 sold off the station and his stock at a sacrifice. A paternal government had in the meantime been attracted by the power of the poet, and with a thoughtfulness that was later bestowed upon another unfortunate Australian poet, it offered to Harpur, through Sir John Robertson, a Gold Commissionership, which he accepted. He removed to Euroina, near Moruya, where he continued to reside up to the date of his death. Still bent upon farming pursuits, he established a home-stead at Eurobodalla; but the impossibility of devoting his undivided attention to it having become manifest to him, he reluctantly resolved to give it up. Then came two crushing blows, under which, weakened by the ravages of disease, he ultimately sank. In 1866 the New South Wales Government

was forced to adopt a policy of retrenchment, and among the first victims were several Gold Commissioners, of whom Harpur was one. This was a heavy blow, but a heavier had to fall. In March of the following year his second son, a most promising lad, and a great favourite with his father, was killed by the accidental discharge of his own gun. This was the great sorrow of the poet's life; he never rallied from the shock, and died on the 10th of June, 1868, his "keen intellect and strong religious faith serving him to the end." His life was one full of troubles and trials, augmented by the neglect of the public, and its failure to realise his ambition to become *the* poet of his native land.

In 1857 he had written a short poem entitled "Love Dreaming of Death," which began with the line—

"I dreamt my little boys were dead."

Ten years later, in the shadow of his bereavement, he added the following stanzas :—

"When this dream-record long ago
I penned, how little did I deem
That yet a distant coming woe
Was shadowed in its theme.

"For ah ! of that beloved twain,
The lips of one, then warm with breath
I since have kissed unkind again,
For they were cold in death.

"A swift wild death ! and when I think
Of all that I have lost thereby,
My heart hath pangs that seem to drink
All Mara's waters dry ;

"Yea, pangs that would my life destroy,
Did faith not whisper oft between ;
Peace ! Sire of an immortal boy
Beyond this mortal scene."

Much of Harpur's best work was contributed to the *Sydney Empire*, founded by Sir Henry Parkes. In addition to the little volume published by Mr. Duncan, Harpur issued, in 1853, a small volume of 126 pages, 8vo, entitled "The Bushrangers: a Play in Four Acts, and other Poems." The drama has been called a "dreary performance," and a "sad mistake," but it contains passages of considerable power. The minor poems of the volume, such as "The Creek of the Four Graves," "A Poet's Home," and "Ned Connor," give evidence of the culture and imagination of the poet; but they are of a description unsuited to the common apprehension. In 1883, fifteen years after the poet's death, a collected edition of his works was published. The principal poem is a strange weird fancy, called "The Tower of the Dream," which leaves a powerful impression upon the mind of the reader. Harpur's verse is not of the popular kind. There is an austere tone in even the best of it, said his friend Kendall—a want of softness and fluency that repels the ordinary reader. There is, however, a freshness in his songs, a distinct and dignified character in his blank verse, and an Australianism which runs through the whole body of his writings.

J. HOWLETT-ROSS.

POEMS AND SONGS.

CHARLES HARPUR.

I.—OUTWARD BOUND.

AWAY, away she plunges,
With her white sails o'er her spread,
Like the sheety clouds that gather
On some great hill's piny head,
Still away she plunges rampant,
Like a lion roused to wrath,
And the late proud wave lies humbled
In the foam-track of her path.

Yet ho ! my gallant sailors,
Wear her head from off the land !
As his steed obeys the Arab,
How she feels the steering hand !
And the deep is her wide dwelling,
Her wild spouse the gipsy wind ;
Like a soul from earth departing
So she leaves the coast behind.

II.—HOPE ON.

POWER'S a cheat, success but trying,
Even pleasure bears a sting ;
Still 'tis useless, useless sighing,
Rather list to Hope replying—
“The flowers must come again with spring ;
And in the trampled way we're going
Streams of comfort yet are flowing—
Hark ! I hear them murmuring.

Fame's a liar in the nation !

Love hath oft a wayward wing ;

Still, hence seek not for occasion

To impugn Hope's sweet persuasion—

“The flowers will come again with spring ;

And in the world-wide way we're going

Streams of pure good yet are flowing—

Hark ! I hear them murmuring.”

Friendship turns, itself denying,

Even Truth, the heart may wring ;

Still, though trust be daily dying,

Listen still to Hope replying—

“The flowers will come again with spring ;

And in the blasted way we're going

There's yet one healing current flowing—

Hark ! I hear it murmuring.”

All is dream like, all off-wingeth,

All that time and tide doth bring ;

Then cold Death his black pall bringeth,

Still what matter while Hope singeth—

“Lo ! heaven is one eternal spring !

And midway through it rolls a river,

Wherein to bathe is health for ever—

Hark ! I hear it murmuring.”

III.—THE CLOUD.

ONE summer morn, out of the sea-waves wild,
A speck-like Cloud, the season's fated child
Came softly floating up the boundless sky,
And o'er the sun-parched hills all brown and dry

Onward she glided through the azure air,
Borne by its motion without toil or care,
When looking down in her ethereal joy,
She marked earth's moilers at their hard employ;

"And oh!" she said, "that by some act of grace
'Twere mine to succour yon fierce-toiling race,
To give the hungry meat, the thirsty drink—
The thought of good is very sweet to think."

The day advanced, and the cloud greater grew,
And greater; likewise her desire to do
Some charity to men had more and more,
As the long sultry summer day on wore,
Greatened and warmed within her fleecy breast,
Like a dove fledging in its downy nest.

The heat waxed fiercer, until all the land
Glared in the sun as 'twere a monstrous brand;
And the shrunk rivers, few and far between,
Like molten metal lightened in the scene.
Ill could Earth's sons endure their toilsome state,
Though still they laboured, for their need was great,
And many a long beseeching look they sped
Towards that fair cloud, with many a sigh that said—
"We famish for thy bounty! For our sake
O break thou! in a showery blessing, break!"

"I feel, and fain would help you," said the cloud,
And towards the earth her bounteous being bowed;
But then rememb'ring a tradition she
Had in her youth learned from her native sea,
That when a cloud adventures from the skies
Too near the altar of the hills, it dies,

Awhile she wavered and was blown about
Hither and thither by the winds of doubt ;
But in the midst of heaven at length all still
She stood ; then suddenly, with a keen thrill
Of light, she said within herself, " I will !
Yea, in the glad strength of devotion, I
Will help you though in helping you I die."

Filled with this thought's divinity, the cloud
Grew world-like vast as earthward more she bowed.
Oh, never erewhile had she dreamed her state
So great might be, beneficently great !
O'er the parched fields in her angelic love
She spread her wide wings like a brooding dove :
Till as her purpose deepened, drawing near,
Divinely awful did her front appear,
And men and beasts all trembled at the view,
And the woods bowed, though well all creatures knew
That near in her, to every kind the same,
A great predestined benefactress came.

And then wide-flashed throughout her full-grown form
The glory of her will ! the pain and storm
Of life's dire dread of death whose mortal threat
From Christ Himself drew agonising sweat,
Flashed seething out of rents amid her heaps
Of lowering gloom, and thence with arrowy leaps
Hissed jagging downward, till a sheety glare
Illumined all the illimitable air ;
The thunder followed, a tremendous sound,
Loud doubling and reverberating round ;
Strong was her will, but stronger yet the power
Of love that now dissolved her in a shower
Dropping in blessings to enrich the earth
With health and plenty at one blooming birth.

Far as the rain extended o'er the land,
A splendid bow the freshened landscape spanned,
Like a celestial arc, hung in the air
By angel artists, to illumine there
The parting triumph of that spirit fair :
The rainbow vanished, but the blessing craved
Rested upon the land the cloud had saved.

IV.—A STORM ON THE MOUNTAINS.

A LONELY boy, far venturing from home
Out on the half-wild herd's faint tracks I roam ;
'Mid rock-brow'd mountains, which with stony frown
Glare into haggard chasms deep adown ;
A rude and craggy world, the prospect lies
Bounded in circuit by the bending skies.
Now at some clear pool scooped out by the shocks
Of rain-floods plunging from the upper rocks
Whose liquid disc in its undimpled rest
Glows like a mighty gem brooching the mountain's
breast,
I drink and muse, or mark the wide-spread herd,
Or list the tinkling of the dingle-bird ;
And now towards some wild-hanging shade I stray,
To shun the bright oppression of the day ;
For round each crag, and o'er each bosky swell,
The fierce refracted heat flares visible,
Lambently restless, like the dazzling hem
Of some else viewless veil held trembling over them.
Why congregate the swallows in the air,
And northward then in rapid flight repair ?
With sudden swelling din, remote yet harsh,
Why roar the bull-frogs in the tea-tree marsh ?

Why cease the locusts to throng up in flight
And clap their gay wings in the fervent light ?
Why climb they, bodingly demure, instead
The tallest spear-grass to the bending head ?
Instinctively, along the sultry sky,
I turn a listless, yet inquiring, eye ;
And mark that now with a slow gradual pace
A solemn trance creams northward o'er its face ;
Yon clouds that late were labouring past the sun,
Reached by its sure arrest, one after one,
Come to a heavy halt ; the airs that played
About the rugged mountains all are laid :
While drawing nearer far-off heights appear,
As in a dream's wild prospect, strangely near !
Till into wood resolves their robe of blue,
And the grey crags rise bluffly on the view.
Such are the signs and tokens that presage
A summer hurricane's forthcoming rage.

At length the south sends out her cloudy heaps,
And up the glens at noontide dimness creeps ;
The birds, late warbling in the hanging green
Of steep-set brakes, seek now some safer screen ;
The herd, in doubt, no longer wanders wide,
But fast ingathering throngs yon mountain's side,
Whose echoes, surging to its tramp, might seem
The mutter'd troubles of some Titan's dream.
Fast the dim legions of the muttering storm
Throng denser, or protruding columns form
While splashing forward from their cloudy lair,
Convolving flames, like scouting dragons, glare :
Low thunders follow, labouring up the sky,
And as fore-running blasts go blaring by,
At once the forest, with a mighty stir,

Bows, as in homage to the thunderer !
Hark ! from the dingoes' blood-polluted dens,
In the gloom-hidden chasms of the glens,
Long fitful howls wail up ; and in the blast
Strange hissing whispers seem to huddle past ;
As if the dread stir had aroused from sleep,
Weird spirits, cloistered in yon cavy steep,
(On which, in the grim past, some Cain's offence
Hath haply outraged heaven !) who rising thence
Wrapped in the boding vapours, laughed again
To wanton in the wild-willed hurricane.
See in the storm's front, sailing dark and dread,
A wide-winged eagle like a black flag spread !
The clouds aloft flash doom ! short stops his flight !
He seems to shrivel in the blasting light !
The air is shattered with a crashing sound,
And he falls, stonelike, lifeless, to the ground.
Now, like a shadow at great nature's heart,
The turmoil grows. Now wonder, with a start,
Marks where right overhead the storm careers,
Girt with black horrors and wide-flaming fears !
Arriving thunders, mustering on his path,
Swell more and more the roarings of his wrath,
As out in widening circles they extend,
And then—at once—in utter silence end.

Portentous silence ! Time keeps breathing past,
Yet it continues ! May this marvel last ?
This wild weird silence in the midst of gloom
So manifestly big with coming doom ?
Tingles the boding ear ; and up the glens
Instinctive dread comes howling from the wild-dog's
dens.

Terrific vision ! Heaven's great ceiling splits,

And a vast globe of writhing fire emits,
Which, pouring down in one continuous stream,
Spans the black concave like a burning beam,
A moment ;—then from end to end it shakes
With a quick motion—and in thunder breaks !
Peal rolled on peal ! while heralding the sound,
As each concussion thrills the solid ground,
Fierce glares coil, snake-like, round the rocky wens
Of the red hills, or hiss into the glens,
Or thick through heaven like flaming falchions swarm,
Cleaving the teeming cisterns of the storm,
From which rain-torrents, searching every gash,
Split by the blast, come sheeting with a dash.

On yon grey peak, from rock-encrusted roots,
The mighty patriarch of the wood upshoots,
In those proud spreading tops' imperial height
The mountain eagle loveth most to light ;
Now dimly seen through tempestuous air,
His form seems harrowed by a mad despair,
As with his ponderous arms uplifted high,
He wrestles with the storm and threshes at the sky
A swift bolt hurtles through the lurid air,
Another thundering crash ! the peak is bare !
Huge hurrying fragments all around are cast,
The wild-winged, mad-limbed monsters of the blast.

The darkness thickens ! With despairing cry
From shattering boughs the rain-drenched parrots fly
Loose rocks roll rumbling from the mountains round,
And half the forest strews the smoking ground ;
To the bared crags the blasts now wilder moan,
And the caves labour with a ghostlier groan.
Wide ranging torrents down the gorges flow

Swift bearing with them to the vale below
Those sylvan wrecks that littered late the path
Of the loud hurricane's all-trampling wrath.
The storm is past. Yet booming on afar
Is heard the rattling of the thunder-car,
And that low muffled moaning, as of grief,
Which follows with a wood-sigh wide and brief.
The clouds break up ; the sun's forth-bursting rays
Clothe the wet landscape with a dazzling blaze ;
The birds begin to sing a lively strain,
And merry echoes ring it o'er again ;
The clustered herd is spreading out to graze,
Though lessening torrents still a hundred ways
Flash downward, and from many a rocky ledge
A mantling gust comes quick and shining o'er the
edge.

Tis evening ; and the torrent's furious flow
Runs gentler now into the lake below.
O'er all the freshened scene no sound is heard,
Save the short twitter of some busied bird,
Or a faint rustle made amongst the trees
By wasting fragments of a broken breeze.
Along the wild and wreck-strewn paths I wind,
Watching earth's happiness with a quiet mind,
And see a beauty all unmarked till now,
Flushing each flowery nook and sunny brow ;
Wished peace returning like a bird of calm,
Brings to the wounded world its blessed healing
balm.

V.—THE CREEK OF THE FOUR GRAVES.

A SETTLER in the olden times went forth
With four of his most bold and trusted men
Into the wilderness—went forth to seek
New streams and wider pastures for his fast
Increasing flocks and herds. O'er mountain routes,
And over wild wolds clouded up with brush,
And cut with marshes perilously deep,—
So went they forth at dawn ; at eve the sun,
That rose behind them as they journeyed out,
Was firing with his nether rim a range
Of unknown mountains, that like ramparts towered
Full in their front ; and his last glances fell
Into the gloomy forest's eastern glades
In golden gleams, like to the angel's sword,
And flashed upon the windings of a creek
That noiseless ran betwixt the pioneers
And those new Apennines—ran, shaded o'er
With boughs of the wild willow, hanging mixed
From either bank, or duskily befringed
With upward tapering feathery swamp-oaks,
The sylvan eyelash always of remote
Australian waters, whether gleaming still
In lake or pool, or bickering along
Between the marges of some eager stream.

Before them, thus extended, wilder grew
The scene each moment and more beautiful ;
For when the sun was all but sunk below
Those barrier mountains, in the breeze that o'er
Their rough enormous backs deep-fleeced with wood
Came whispering down, the wide up-slanting sea
Of fanning leaves in the descending rays

Danced dazzlingly, tingling as if the trees
Thrilled to the roots for very happiness.
But when the sun had wholly disappeared
Behind those mountains—O, what words, what hues,
Might paint the wild magnificence of view
That opened westward! Out extending, lo!
The height's rose crowding, with their summits all
Dissolving as it seemed, and partly lost
In the exceeding radiancy aloft;
And thus transfigured, for awhile they stood
Like a great company of archæons, crowned
With burning diadems, and tented o'er
With canopies of purple and of gold.

Here halting wearied now the sun was set,
Our travellers kindled for their first night's camp
A brisk and crackling fire, which seemed to them
A wilder creature than 'twas elsewhere wont,
Because of the surrounding savageness.
And as they supped, birds of new shape and plume
And wild strange voice came by; and up the steep
Between the climbing forest growths they saw,
Perched on the bare abutments of the hills,
Where haply yet some lingering gleam fell through,
The wallaroo look forth. Eastward at last
The glow was wasted into formless gloom,
Night's front; then westward the high massing woods
Steeped in a swart but mellow Indian hue,
A deep dusk loveliness, lay ridged and heaped,
Only the more distinctly for their shade,
Against the twilight heaven—a cloudless depth,
Yet luminous with sunset's fading glow;
And thus awhile in the lit dusk they seemed
To hang like mighty pictures of themselves

In the still chambers of some vaster world.
At last, the business of the supper done,
The echoes of the solitary place
Came as in sylvan wonder wide about
To hear and imitate the voices strange,
Within the pleasant purlieus of the fire
Lifted in glee, but to be hushed ere long,
As with the darkness of the night there came
O'er the adventurers, each and all, some sense
Of danger lurking in its forest lairs.

But, nerved by habit, they all gathered round
About the well-built fire, whose nimble tongues
Sent up continually a strenuous roar
Of fierce delight, and from their fuming pipes
Drawing rude comfort, round the pleasant light
With grave discourse they planned their next day's
deeds.

Wearied at length, their couches they prepared
Of rushes, and the long green tresses pulled
From the bent boughs of the wild willows near ;
Then the four men stretched out their tired limbs
Under the dark arms of the forest trees,
That mixed aloft, high in the starry air,
In arcs and leafy domes whose crossing curves,
Blended with denser intergrowth of sprays.
Were seen in mass traced out against the clear
Wide gaze of heaven ; and trustful of the watch
Kept near them by their master, soon they slept,
Forgetful of the perilous wilderness
That lay around them like a spectral world ;
And all things slept ; the circling forest trees,
Their foremost boles carved from a crowded mass
Less visible by the watch-fire's bladed gleams

That ran far out in the umbrageous dark
Beyond the broad red ring of constant light ;
And even the shaded mountains darkly seen,
Their bluff brows looming through the stirless air,
Looked in their stillness solemnly asleep ;
Yea, thence surveyed—the universe might have
seemed

Coiled in vast rest ; only that one dark cloud,
Diffused and shapen like a spider huge,
Crept as with crawling legs along the sky,
And that the stars in their bright orders, still
Cluster by cluster glowingly revealed,
As this slow cloud moved on, high over all,
Peaceful and wakeful, watched the world below.

PART II.

Meanwhile the cloudless eastern heaven had grown
More luminous, and now the moon arose
Above the hill, when lo ! that giant cone
Erewhile so dark, seemed inwardly aglow
With her instilled irradiance, while the trees
That fringed its outline, their huge statures dwarfed
By distance into brambles, and yet all
Clearly defined against her ample orb,
Out of its very disc appeared to swell
In shadowy relief, as they had been
All sculptured from its surface as she rose.
Then her full light in silvery sequence still
Cascading forth from ridgy slope to slope,
Chased mass by mass the broken darkness down
Into the dense-brushed valleys, where it crouched,
And shrank, and struggled, like a dragon-doubt
Glooming a lonely spirit.

His lone watch
The master kept, and wakeful looked abroad
On all the solemn beauty of the world ;
And by some sweet and subtle tie that joins
The loved and cherished, absent from our side,
With all that is serene and beautiful
In nature, thoughts of home began to steal
Into his musings—when, on a sudden, hark !
A bough cracks loudly in a neighbouring brake !
Against the shade side of a bending gum.
With a strange horror gathering to his heart,
As if his blood were charged with insect life
And writhed along in clots, he stilled himself
And listened heedfully, till his held breath
Became a pang. Nought heard he : silence there
Had recomposed her ruffled wings, and now
Deep brooded in the darkness ; so that he
Again mused on, quiet and reassured.
But there again—crack upon crack ! Awake !
O heaven ! have hell's worst fiends burst howling up
Into the death-doomed world ? Or whence, if not
From diabolic rage could surge a yell
So horrible as that which now affrights
The shuddering dark ! Beings as fell are near !
Yea, beings in their dread inherited hate
Awful, vengeful as hell's worst fiends, are come
In vengeance ! For behold from the long grass
And nearer brakes arise the bounding forms
Of painted savages, full in the light
Thrown outward by the fire, that roused and lapped
The rounding darkness with its ruddy tongues
More fiercely than before, as though even it
Had felt the sudden shock the air received
From those terrific cries.

On then they came
And rushed upon the sleepers, three of whom
But started, and then weltered prone beneath
The first fell blow dealt down on each by three
Of the most stalwart of their pitiless foes ;
But one again, and yet again, rose up,
Rose to his knees, under the crushing strokes
Of huge clubbed nulla-nullas, till his own
Warm blood was blinding him. For he was one
Who had with misery nearly all his days
Lived lonely, and who therefore in his soul
Did hunger after hope, and thirst for what
Hope still had promised him, some taste at least
Of human good however long deferred ;
And now he could not, even in dying, loose
His hold on life's poor chances still to come,
Could not but so dispute the terrible fact
Of death, e'en in death's presence. Strange it is,
Yet oft 'tis seen, that fortune's pampered child
Consents to death's untimely power with less
Reluctance, less despair, than does the wretch
Who hath been ever blown about the world,
The straw-like sport of fate's most bitter blasts ;
So though the shadows of untimely death,
Inevitably under every stroke
But thickened more and more, against them still
The poor wretch struggled, nor would cease until
One last great blow, dealt down upon his head
As if in mercy, gave him to the dust,
With all his many woes and frustrate hopes.

The master, chilled with horror, saw it all ;
From instinct more than conscious thought he raised

His death-charged tube, and at that murderous crew
Firing, saw one fall ox-like to the earth,
Then turned and fled. Fast fled he, but as fast
His deadly foes went thronging on his track.
Fast! for in full pursuit behind him yelled
Men whose wild speech no word for mercy hath!
And as he fled the forest beasts as well
In general terror through the brakes ahead
Crashed scattering, or with maddening speed athwart
His course came frequent. On, still on, he flies;
Flies for dear life, and still behind him hears,
Nearer and nearer, the light rapid dig
Of many feet, nearer and nearer still.

PART III.

So went the chase. Now at a sudden turn
Before him lay the steep-banked mountain creek;
Still on he kept perforce, and from a rock
That beaked the bank, a promontory bare,
Plunging right forth and shooting feet-first down,
Sunk to his middle in the flashing stream,
In which the imaged stars seemed all at once
To burst like rockets into one wide blaze.
Then wading through the ruffled waters, forth
He sprang, and seized a snake-like root that from
The opponent bank protruded, clenching there
His cold hand like a clamp of steel; and thence
He swung his dripping form aloft, the blind
And breathless haste of one who flies for life
Urging him on: up the dark ledge he climbed
When in his face—O verily our God
Hath those in His peculiar care, for whom
The daily prayers of spotless womanhood

And helpless infancy are offered up!—
There in its face a cavity he felt,
The upper earth of which in one rude mass
Was held fast bound by the enwoven roots
Of two old trees, and which, beneath the mould,
Over the dark and clammy cave below,
Twisted like knotted snakes. 'Neath these he crept
Just as the dark forms of his hunters thronged
The steep bold rock whence he before had plunged.
Duskily visible beneath the moon
They paused a space, to mark what bent his course
Might take beyond the stream. But now no form
Amongst the moveless fringe of fern was seen
To shoot up from its outline, 'mid the boles
And mixing shadows of the taller trees,
All standing now in the keen radiance there
So ghostly still as in a solemn trance ;
But nothing in the silent prospect stirred ;
Therefore they augured that their prey was yet
Within the nearer distance, and they all
Plunged forward till the fretted current boiled
Amongst their crowding forms from bank to bank ;
And searching thus the stream across, and then
Along the ledges, combing down each clump
Of long flagged swamp grass where it flourished high
The whole dark line passed slowly, man by man,
Athwart the cave !

Keen was their search but vain ;
There grouped in dark knots standing in the stream
That glimmered past them moaning as it went,
They marvelled ; passing strange to them it seemed ;
Some old mysterious fable of their race,

That brooded o'er the valley and the creek,
Returned upon their minds, and fear-struck all
And silent, they withdrew. And when the sound
Of their retreating steps had died away,
As back they hurried to despoil the dead
In the stormed camp, then rose the fugitive,
Renewed his flight, nor rested from it, till
He gained the shelter of his longed-for home.
And in that glade, far in the doomful wild,
In sorrowing record of an awful hour
Of human agony and loss extreme,
Untimely spousals with a desert death,
Four grassy mounds are there beside the creek,
Bestrewn with sprays and leaves from the old trees
Which moan the ancient dirges that have caught
The heed of dying ages, and for long
The traveller passing them in safety there
Would call the place—The Creek of the Four Graves.

W. M. W. Call.

1817—1890.

THE life of Wathen Mark Wilks Call was outwardly an uneventful one. He was born June 7th, 1817. He kept the statutory terms of Cambridge, graduating B.A. in 1842, and M.A. in 1846. He entered Holy Orders in 1843, and for a time faithfully discharged the duties of several curacies. He withdrew from the service of the Church on conscientious grounds in 1856; and his life thenceforward was that of a literary man and philosophic student. He wrote much in the *Leader* under G. H. Lewes, and in the *Westminster* and *Theological Reviews*, and later in the *Fortnightly*, a body of writing that contains much of permanent value. In 1857 he married Mrs. Charles Hennell, the widow of the well-known author of "An Inquiry into the Origin of Christianity." Though Mr. Call constantly and consistently took a warm interest in all schemes of social amelioration, and was, in truth, an advanced political reformer, he was always careful to say that "though a social reformer he was no socialist, and though a positivist he was not a Comteist." In truth, he was too individual to attach himself blindly to any school or section, and he never very prominently appeared in either aspect before the wide public. His work was rather that of the silent preparer of the way for others. He died in August

1890, at the advanced age of seventy-three, having outlived most of his early friends and co-workers.

Besides an early volume, which contained some finished poetic translations, he published two volumes of poems; but he prejudiced his chances of wide acceptance by loading both books with teachings, protests, and indications of such a position as the world is generally only too apt to misunderstand. In the case of the volume entitled "Reverberations," he inserted a long prose introduction, explaining why he had retired from the ministry of the Church of England, and the conclusions to which his logic and reason had brought him. Of all places, the forefront of a volume of poems, many of them sweet, tender, and full of the charm of nature and the sense of human brotherhood, was surely the least fitting. He never seems to have felt or realised the inconsistency; and in the fact that he did not, we have the reason at once of his comparative failure, and of his serenity and contentment under it.

As a poet, he has not only a fine feeling for nature, but a depth of sympathy and penetration which are rare. This comes out in his classic reproductions in a very marked manner, giving them a colour and a reality. They thrill with a life that is modern—he has touched them with a sense of the present-day problems that most occupied his mind. "Alcestis" and "Admetus" are, indeed, noble poems; and so are "Balder" and "Thor"; but it is the sense of a new idea that makes them appeal to and hold our attention as they do. His "Ariadne" is beautiful and suffused with ideal colour. There is a gentle orphic mysticism in these and many other

of his poems which has quite an individual accent. Into every legend he reads a modern meaning: with him it becomes the medium of a new lesson—not that he preached when the inspiration was upon him; but he never sang but he unconsciously or half-consciously taught or sought to teach. The beautiful poem of “Manoli,” which originally appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, illustrates the saddening idea that the collective welfare is too frequently purchased by the suffering of the individual either as martyr or as victim; and that, as civilisation more and more brings its leaders under dominating ideas, so the penalty that comes in the rear of dominating ideas means suffering and death for many innocent and beautiful natures. The poem is conceived with fine dramatic sense, and the motive is adequate and strong.

Seldom, if ever, have we read a more beautiful rendering of the praise and gladness of self-abnegation than in the poem “Khaled,” in which, too, the Moslem atmosphere is effectively preserved. Goethe, who was one of the two he designates in “My Poets” at the last, and to whom he refers as “Our king and priest” in his “Hymn,” pp. 542-3, would himself have read that poem with pleasure.

Mr. Call’s shorter poems are marked by great beauty of thought, by chaste images, and now and then by almost unexpected and subtle turns which, for unaffected felicity, may well challenge the admiration even of the severest critic. In these lyrics we can in so far read the man,—meditative, shy, loving to brood over his own thoughts and with the most benevolent feelings toward all men—he was the very man for the quiet work of a parish priest.

If the life of literature and study afforded him a serene satisfaction, he must often have felt that something was still wanting—a sphere of more direct ministration to human needs and sorrows. For even in the heart of Mr. Call's revolt there are frequent traces of a gentle and beautiful reaction. The dogma repels him; the thought and human experience behind the dogma, everywhere insisting on asserting themselves, draw him gently back again. How characteristic it is that he should have allowed himself, under the influence of George Eliot, and G. H. Lewes, in the beautiful poem beginning, "When in the green and glimmering lanes I linger," to substitute for the word "God," which he had written originally, the almost meaningless phrase "World" in this refrain, "I praise thee, World": and yet in his very last corrections he returned to the original "God." Perhaps this sonnet, entitled simply "Renunciation," may have some meaning in this light when thoughtfully read:—

"Wakeful I lay all night and thought of God,
Of heaven, and of the crowns pale martyrs gain,
Of souls in high and purgatorial pain,
And the red path which murdered seers have trod:
I heard the trumpets which the angels blow,
I saw the cleaving sword, the measuring rod,
I watched the stream of sound continuous flow
Past the gold towers where seraphs make abode.
But now I let the aching splendour go,
I dare not call the crowned angels peers,
Henceforth! I am content to dwell below
Mid common joys, with humble smiles and tears,
Delighted in the sun and breeze to grow,
A child of human hopes and human fears."

ALEX. H. JAPP.

MANOLI.

A MOLDAVIAN LEGEND.

W. M. W. CALL.

ALL day they built, and wall and tower stood
crown'd

Among the sunbeams. Here some column grew
To perfect shape, here some thin minaret
Soared to the clouds ; here dome or massy roof
Swelled to completion, or ethereal arch
Up like a rainbow sprang, till all the work
Looked glorious, and the angels called it good.

Strong limb, fine hand, true eye, and subtle brain
Had toiled, thro' glowing days and balmy nights,
For nine long years, at their imperial task ;
And now the work its crowning finish took,
The workmen smiled, then whispered to their hearts
Soft flattering words, and paused amid their toil,
Like men who feel that they have greatly done.

So pausing under the large star of day,
For they all night, and till the dawn had wrought,
What saw they, or what felt they, that they looked
Helpless, bewildered, like to men that wake,
Dashed out of sleep by some mysterious woe !
Was it a dream, or did their labour fade
Dreamlike away ? did stone from stone withdraw,
And all that mighty fabric which o'erhung
The day and night, like some frail vision pass ?
They looked, they touched, they moved, they called aloud.
It was no dream—no dream : the solid walls
Were vanished, and their nine years' labour lost.

With the new day did they their task renew,
For noble hearts should fight for evermore,
And conquer fate ; and lo ! the hands that shape
The temples of their gods, and down all time
Transmit the perfect beauty they create,
Are pliant strong, fine-fingered, ample-palmed,
Instinct with hope and courage as with art.

So thrice three days the master-masons wrought,
And thrice three nights the uncreating Powers,
That love not Order, which makes strong the world,
Nor Beauty, that gives gladness to all life,
Undid what they had done. The angels looked
Forth from their silver bowers at morn or eve,
And wept, and broke their harpstrings, but no strength
Was in their hands, for evil is of God,
Who makes a nobler good grow out of ill,
From old disorder calls new order up,
And crowns the sons of Chaos, bearing palms.

So thrice three days they toiled, but when the night
Following the tenth fair day, with opiate wand
Closed the tired eyes of men, Manoli slept,
And a dream came, and with the dream a voice :
"Cease ! cease ! Manoli !" so the vision said,
"Cease : for your solid-seeming walls and towers
Shall fade, and fade, until the victim come
Whom the dark lords demand. Swear, therefore, swear,
Swear one and all ; and secret be the oath.
Swear that the first sweet woman, whom ye see,
The first sweet woman that with morning comes,
To cheer and serve you, be it wife or maid,
Sister or daughter, ere her tender life
Have opened all its blossoms to the sun,
Shall perish ; housed with death ere yet she die."

Manoli heard and took the deadly oath
Scarce knowing what he did. So much the hearts
Of men who live for some o'ermastering thought,
That shapes or seems to shape the world anew,
Forget the world that is : still loving more
The far-off image of a faultless life,
Some fair ideal-world without a tear,
Than common men with common griefs and joys.

Till sunrise slept Manoli ; with the sun
He rose, and, wind-like, clomb the neighbouring height,
And with great eyes, far travelling o'er the fields,
Far o'er the fields and o'er the level road,
Looked left, then right, then left, then right again.
O fear ! O sorrow ! whom does he behold ?
Whom sees he coming ? Through the dewy fields,
Amid the lily flowers—a lily too—
She comes ; he sees her ; he beholds her come,
His darling of one summer, his sweet wife !
Manoli clasped his hands, he looked to heaven,
As men do ever when sharp peril calls.
He prayed. What can men do when they are weak,
And God alone in all the world is strong—
What can men do but pray ? “ O God,” he cried,
“ Send Thou the foaming rain-flood, let it scoop
The earth away, and ye, O rivers ! flow,
And hurl the boiling wave o'er thundering rocks,
To stay my darling, my beloved, my wife ! ”

And the Lord heard him, and the rain-floods walked
Broad-trampling over earth, and rivers rose,
And smoking waves fell thundering o'er the rocks,
But she went onward—nearer to her fate !
Manoli knelt, and clasped his hands again ;
“ O God ! ” he cried, “ send thou a conquering wind,

Whose passionate breath shall root up pine and oak.
O wind ! heap rock on rock, and hill on hill,
To stay my friend, my darling, my sweet wife ! ”
God heard, and pitied, and the obedient wind
Came down, and with its wild and panting breath
Uprooted pine and oak, heaped rock on rock,
Piled hill on hill, to stay Manoli's wife !
But in long mazes, round and round she went,
Still onward, onward, nearer to her fate.

Meanwhile the master-masons saw her come,
The lords of art that, throned above all life,
Make thought and fancy blossom out of stone,
And live for them—them only. Far away
They saw her come, and as a sudden breeze
Creeps o'er still waters, shivering as it creeps,
So ran the sharp delight thro' every soul ;
For hope rose glittering like some pilot star,
And the large lust of beauty that demands
All sacrifice of child, or wife, or self,
Looked now for ripe fulfilment. So they stood,
With open, breathless lips, and lifted hands,
And full-orbed eyes, quivering with eager joy,
Expectant, silent. But Manoli came,
And raised his wife and bore her in his arms,
And said—as any child in sport might say :
“ Rest, O my noble love, rest, rest, awhile !
Rest, royal heart, until we raise thee here
A dainty pleasure-hall ; where marble blooms
Into all fairy shapes of lily and rose.
Far from rude sights and sounds here rest, love, rest.
And sleep as men who sleep in Paradise ! ”
Then, as she stood, the marble tower grew up,
With bloom of rose and lily. Swift and calm,

As men that mean to do a dreadful deed,
The master-masons built, and with them built
Manoli ; and the walls rose high and higher,
From dainty ankle up to dainty knee—
Till all that childlike pleasure left her face,
And, “ Ah,” she cried, “ enough, enough, my love !
Enough ! Manoli ! master, stop the work—
Stop it ; your sport grows deadly. Hear my cry !
Oh ! hear your little one—your pet—your wife !
By that first kiss you gave me when we sate
Among the violets by the mossy tree,
And by the timid kiss that answered yours,
Hear, hear, Manoli—husband—master—hear ! ”

Manoli heard. But they went building on,
And the wall rose, from ankle fair, to knee
Yet fairer ; and from knee to fairest waist,
Up to her roseate breast—love’s proper home.
Then fear came o’er her, and she cried again :
“ Manoli ! O Manoli—husband—friend !
Enough, enough ! Cease, cease, your building, love !—
You frighten me, more timid now than wont,
Oh ! think of the sweet babe that shall be born—
My child and thine ! Oh ! think of his meek smile,
And of his twining fingers catching yours,
His father—O my lord ! Manoli ! cease,
Cease ere you kill the child ; the walls close round
My little one, thy child, thy child and mine ! ”

He heard her, but he still went building on,
And the wall rose from ankle fair to knee
Yet fairer, from fair knee to fairest waist,
From fairest waist to breast all violet-veined,
Love’s proper home, till o’er her pleading eyes,
And lovely, lifted hands, the marble bower

Rose, covering all her beauty from the day,
While thus her loving voice came mixed with tears,—
“Now, now the walls close round. I die, I die.
My lord, farewell! I kiss thee ere I die;
Forgive me if with deed, or thought of mine,
Not knowing it, I have offended thee.
Manoli! master! now the darkness comes,
I feel for thy dear hand amid the gloom,
My lord, my love, my master, give it me,
Oh! give it me, Manoli, ere I die,
Oh! give it, give it!” Thus she wailed and prayed,
Till all that love and sorrow from the world
Had passed for ever, and amid the fear
And gloom of the great shadow men call Death,
She slept as those who sleep in Paradise.

But they went building on, and stone on stone
Was reared, and the great fabric touched the sky,
As days clasped hand with days. Supreme it stood,
Majestic, massive, silent, beautiful!
And men came there, and wondered while they gazed,
And thronged around the masters, as they told
Of the true, noble life that passed away,
To round their labour to full-sphered success:—
For always the great conquest of the world
Is won with blood. ’Twas so in elder years,
The splendid yesterdays our fathers knew:
’Tis so in these pale faded years of ours;
And when these busy hands and brains are still,
And mightier builders work with lordlier aims,
The same old doom will reign, and men will die,
To crown their age with beauty, and to bring
Imperial days while *they* go building on.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

W. M. W. CALL.

I.—BALDER.

BALDER, the white Sungod, has departed !
Beautiful as summer dawn was he,
Loved of gods and men, the royal-hearted !
Balder, the white Sungod, has departed,
Has gone home where all the brave ones be.

For the tears of the imperial Mother,
For a universe that weeps and prays,
Rides Hermoder forth to seek his brother,
Rides for love of that distressful mother,
Through lead-coloured glens and cross-blue ways.

With the howling wind and raving torrent,
Nine days rode he, deep and deeper down,
Won the waste death-kingdom, wild and horrent,
Won the lonely bridge that spans the torrent
Of the Moaning-river by Hell-town.

There an ancient Portress watches ever,
Sleepless torturer of the brain of men,
Merciless and skilled in arts that sever
Soul from soul and mind from mind for ever,
That they never, never meet again.

Cried Hermoder : " Came my Balder hither ?
Balder whom both gods and men hold dear ? "
But the Portress, who delights to wither
Hope's white blossoms, answered, " Hither, hither,
Balder came, but Balder is not here.

“Balder is not here ; in blind abysses
Downward, northward, in the realm of Death,
Balder dwells, where whitening roars and hisses,
Leaping down the invisible abysses,
Hell’s mad stream with pants of furious breath.

“Ride thou on, a journey wild and dreary,
If in quest of Balder thou wilt ride ;
Through the heavy gloom, where, worn and weary,
Faints the traveller in his journey dreary,
Where all ghostly sounds and sights abide.”

Onward rode the youth in silent wonder,—
Mane of Gold ! what steed is like to thee ?
On through fire-trenched vales, hills scarred with
thunder,

Onward rode the youth in silent wonder,
Brave and good must young Hermoder be.

Look ! o’erleaping Hela’s cloudy portal,
In the dim dead world he stands below ;
There he sees the beautiful Immortal,
Sees his Balder, under Hela’s portal,
Sees him and forgets his pain and woe.

“O my Balder ! have I, have I found thee—
Balder, beautiful as summer-morn ?
O my Sungod ! hearts of heroes crowned thee
For their King : they lost, but now have found thee ;
Gods and men shall not be left forlorn.

“Balder ! brother ! the Divine has vanished,
The eternal splendours all have fled,
Truth and Love and Nobleness are banished,
The Heroic and Divine have vanished,
Nature has no God, and Earth lies dead.

"Come thou back, my Balder, king and brother !
Teach the hearts of men to love the Gods.
Come thou back, and comfort our great mother,
Come with truth and bravery, Balder, brother,
Bring the Godlike back to men's abodes."

But the Nornas let him pray unheeded ;
Balder never was to come again.
Vainly, vainly, young Hermoder pleaded ;
Balder never was to come. Unheeded,
Young Hermoder wept and prayed in vain.

Oh, the wondrous truth of this old story !
Even now it is as it was then :
Earth hath lost a portion of her glory,
And, like Balder in the ancient story,
Never comes the Beautiful again.

Still the young Hermoder journeys bravely,
Through lead-coloured glens and cross-blue ways ;
Still he calls his brother, pleading gravely,
Still to the death-kingdom ventures bravely,
Calmly to the eternal Terror prays.

But the Fates relent not ; strong Endeavour,
Courage, noble Feeling, are in vain,
For the Beautiful has gone for ever.
Vain are Courage, Genius, strong Endeavour ;
Never comes the Beautiful again.

Do you think I counsel weak despairing ?
No ! like young Hermoder I would ride,
With an humble, yet a gallant daring,
I would leap unquailing, undespairing,
Over the huge precipice's side.

Dead and gone is the old world's Ideal,
The old arts and old religions fled ;
But I gladly live amid the Real,
And I seek a worthier Ideal.
Courage, brothers, Heaven is overhead !

II.—SUMMER DAYS.

IN summer, when the days were long,
We walked, two friends, in field and wood,
Our heart was light, our step was strong,
And life lay round us, fair as good,
In summer, when the days were long.

We strayed from morn till evening came,
We gathered flowers, and wove us crowns,
We walked mid poppies red as flame,
Or sat upon the yellow downs,
And always wished our life the same.

In summer, when the days were long,
We leapt the hedgegrow, crost the brook ;
And still her voice flowed forth in song,
Or else she read some graceful book,
In summer, when the days were long.

And then we sat beneath the trees,
With shadows lessening in the noon ;
And in the sunlight and the breeze,
We revell'd, many a glorious June,
While larks were singing o'er the leas.

In summer, when the days were long,
We plucked wild strawberrries, ripe and red,
Or feasted, with no grace but song,
On golden nectar, snow-white bread,
In summer, when the days were long.

We loved, and yet we knew it not,
For loving seemed like breathing then,
We found a heaven in every spot,
Saw angels, too, in all good men,
And dreamt of gods in grove and grot.

In summer, when the days are long,
Alone I wander, muse alone ;
I see her not, but that old song,
Under the fragrant wind is blown,
In summer, when the days are long.

Alone I wander in the wood,
But one fair spirit hears my sighs ;
And half I see the crimson hood,
The radiant hair, the calm glad eyes,
That charmed me in life's summer mood.

In summer, when the days are long,
I love her as I loved of old ;
My heart is light, my step is strong,
For love brings back those hours of gold,
In summer, when the days are long.

III.—ANGELS IN THE WOODS.

H EAVEN still is with us, and the angels walk,
Seen or unseen, in city and in glen ;
And half we hear their old melodious talk,
Half see them crown'd with glory as they walk,
When most we love, and loving most, are men.

Hence what surprise, what passion can there be
To step at once into the golden air ?
Faith still is ours : what better men than we
In this ripe age of our dear world may be ?
Hearts that believe and love do well to dare.

Step boldly mid the foxglove and the fern,
And kiss the vermeil lips of woodland rose,
And hear the warble of the tripping burn,
That sings amid the foxglove and the fern,
And sobs among the pebbles as it flows.

Wade where the reeds and yellow flags are seen,
And mossy stones, a fairy bridge, are laid ;
But cease, for gliding the tall flowers between,
The Playmates of the angels, glad, serene,
Chase the long sunbeams flying down the glade.

What tree beyond the stream, across the skies
Spreads its green beauty to the air and sun ?
What golden apples, tinct with crimson dyes,
Thro' emerald leaves, before the glimmering skies,
Shine, as that holier fruit, on Eve undone ?

O tree ! that yet maturer earth shall bear,
O fruit ! one day no fable but a fact,
O child ! with king-cups in thy glittering hair,
Glad prophecies of what our earth shall bear,
When song and dream condense to noble act.

O lovely Forms ! that over reed and grass,
Shed light and fragrance and a vernal morn !
O lovely Forms ! that pass me and repass,
Here would I lie for ever on the grass,
And wait until the promised age be born.

Here would I watch those Seraph-lords supreme,
With radiant fingers, pointing, hand o'er hand,
To younger angels on the charmed stream,
While the large shadows of those wings supreme,
Touch with rare moonlight brook and flowery strand.

Here would I see those children in a ring
Dance with the angels or with angels play,
Or hear the songs those crownèd harpers sing
To angels linked with children in a ring,
And garlanded with the celestial May.

So grace and gladness in my soul should dwell,
Till the old world again grew young and good :
And holier men should holier children tell,
How dreams come true, and how good angels dwell
By each bright hearth, and haunt each bourne and wood.

IV.—THE BIRD AND THE BOWER.

I HAD a little bower when I was young ;
A bird sang there,
And I, poor child, still listened while it sung
Its magic air.

For still it said, or still it seemed to say,
“The world is thine ;
See how the roses redden, waters play,
And moonbeams shine.

“See how the sun, with golden, dreaming light,
The valley fills ;
See how he crowds with a blue gloom like night
The noonday hills.

“Deep in the foxglove’s bell, where’er thou go,
Still drones the bee,
And the red trout, where warbling brooklets flow,
Leaps up for thee.

“For thee the sun and moon were made of yore,
The cloud and star ;
For thee God made the After, the Before,
The Near and Far.

“ All love, all power, all worship, all delight,
All fancies wild ;
All rainbow hopes, all dreams of day and night,
For thee, O child !

“ The fairy sitting in her home of fern,
The piping faun,
The nymph that bears aloft her river urn,
Or guards the lawn.

“ For thee God made the genii of the air,
And of the deep,
And the quaint elves that charm, with witchery rare,
The world of sleep.

“ All, all is thine ! thou, thou alone art king,
Fair, good, and wise !
Fresh, fresh from heaven, before thee life's great spring,
Full-blossomed, lies.”

Thus in my little bower, when I was young,
The song began,
And all life's summer through the siren sung,
To lure the man.

But now grey autumn thins that magic bower,
The green leaves fall,
And the old glory fades from tree and flower,
When wild winds call.

I hear no more the fairy bugles blow,
The stars are dim,
I hear no more, at the sea's ebb and flow,
The sea-maid's hymn.

With lowly heart and meek sad thought I stand,
A dreamer vain :

But ah ! that vision of the morning land
Returns again.

I dreamt it once, perchance as childhood dreams,
When life began ;
I dream it now, nor think it less beseems
The time-taught man.

I cannot tell if I shall find it true,
In worlds afar,
If I shall win, in that o'erhanging blue,
My regal star.

But still the heart a far-off glory sees,
Strange music hears ;
A something not of earth still haunts the breeze,
The sun, and spheres.

Still, still I clasp my hands, still look and pine,
Still weep and pray,
Still, still am followed by a voice divine,
And far away.

What mean these yearnings, these mysterious sighs,
This hope like fear,
This feeling in the dark, these sudden cries,
When none are near ?

All things that be, all love, all thought, all joy
Sky, cloud and star,
Spell-bind the man, as once the growing boy,
A point afar ;

Point to some world of endless, endless truth,
Delight and power,
And thus comes back that grand old dream of youth,—
The bird and bower,

V.—HYMN.

WHEN in the green and glimmering lanes I linger,
And gather roses, kissing their red lips ;
Or when, deep-dyed by Autumn's ruddy finger,
I feast on bunches ripe of coral hips,
I praise thee, God.

When I am smothered under children's faces,
Dazzled by floating air and warm blue eyes,
And catching glimpses, mid their wild embraces,
Of delicate white limbs that scorn disguise,
I praise thee, God.

When I am bedded deep in flowering grasses,
Watching the sailing clouds and wandering air,
Or borrowing wings from every bird that passes,
Or facing the bold sun, with stare for stare,
I praise thee, God.

When by the marbled lake I lie and listen
To one sweet voice that sings to me alone,
Veiled by green leaves whose silver faces glisten
In breezy light down the blue summer blown,
I praise thee, God.

When her white ivory fingers twine and quiver,
Twinkling thro' mine, and when her golden hair
Flows down her neck, like sunlight down a river,
And half she is, and half she is not there,
I praise thee, God.

When I can look from my proud height above her,
In her quaint faëry face, or o'er her bend,
And know I am her friend but not her lover,
That she is not my lover but my friend,
I praise thee, God.

When Margaret pale, and rare and gorgeous Helen,
Or sweet Ottilia, love, weep, smile, or feast,
For the still world of lovely forms I dwell in,
And for thy Poet, for our king and priest,
I praise thee, God.

When I have heard the imprisoned echoes breaking
From rolling clouds, like shouts of gods in fight,
Or armies calling armies, when awaking,
They rise all breathless from too large delight,
I praise thee, God.

When I have seen the scarlet lightnings falling
From cloudy battlements, like throneless kings ;
Have seen great angels that, to angels calling,
Open and shut their gold and silver wings,
I praise thee, God.

When I have passed a nobler life in sorrow :
Have seen rude masses grow to fulgent spheres ;
Seen how To-day is father of To-morrow,
And how the Ages justify the Years,
I praise thee, God.

VII.—PRAYER OF AQUINAS.

ALL day Aquinas sat alone,
Compress'd he sat and spake no word,
As still as any man of stone,
In streets where never voice is heard ;
With massive front and air antique,
He sat, did neither move nor speak,
For thought like his seem'd words too weak.
The shadows brown about him lay ;
From sunrise till the sun went out,
Had sat alone that man of grey,
That marble man, hard cramp'd by doubt,

Some kingly problem had he found,
Some new belief not wholly sound,
Some hope that overleapt all bound.

All day Aquinas sat alone,
No answer to his question came,
And now he rose with hollow groan,
And eyes that seem'd half love, half flame.
On the bare floor he flung him down,
Pale marble face, half smile, half frown,
Brown shadow else mid shadows brown.

"O God," he said, "it cannot be,
Thy Morning-star, with endless moan,
Should lift his fading orbs to Thee,
And thou be happy on thy throne.
It were not kind, nay Father, nay,
It were not just, O God, I say ;
Pray for the Devil, Jesus, pray !

"How can thy kingdom ever come,
While the fair angels howl below ?
All holy voices would be dumb,
All loving eyes would fill with woe,
To think the lordliest Peer of Heaven,
The starry leader of the Seven,
Would never, never be forgiven.

"Pray for the Devil, Jesus, pray,
O Word that made thine angel speak !
Lord ! let thy pitying tears have way,
Dear God ! not man alone is weak,
What is created still must fall,
And fairest still we frailest call,
Will not Christ's blood avail for all ?

“Pray for the Devil, Jesus, pray,
O Father think upon thy child ;
Turn from thy own bright world away,
And look upon that dungeon wild,
O God ! O Jesus ; see how dark
That den of woe, O Saviour mark
How angels weep, how groan, Hark, Hark !

“He will not, will not do it more,
Restore him to his throne again,
O ! open wide that dismal door
Which presses on the souls in pain ;
So men and angels all will say
Our God is good. O ! day by day,
Pray for the Devil, Jesus, pray.”

All night Aquinas knelt alone,
Alone with black and dreadful Night,
Until before his pleading moan,
The darkness ebb'd away in light,
Then rose the saint and “God,” said he,
“If darkness change to light with thee
The devil may yet an angel be.”

VIII.—THE PEOPLE'S PETITION.

O LORDS ! O rulers of the nation !
O softly clothed ! O richly fed !
O men of wealth and noble station !
Give us our daily bread.

For you we are content to toil,
For you our blood like rain is shed ;
Then lords and rulers of the soil,
Give us our daily bread.

Your silken robes, with endless care,
Still weave we ; still unclothed, unfed,
We make the raiment that ye wear.
Give us our daily bread.

In the red forge-light do we stand,
We early leave—late seek our bed,
Tempering the steel for your right hand.
Give us our daily bread.

We sow your fields, ye reap the fruit,
We live in misery and in dread.
Hear but our prayer, and we are mute,
Give us our daily bread.

Throughout old England's pleasant fields,
There is no spot where we may tread,
No house to us sweet shelter yields.
Give us our daily bread.

Fathers are we ; we see our sons,
We see our fair young daughters, dead :
Then hear us, O ye mighty ones !
Give us our daily bread.

'Tis vain—with cold, unfeeling eye
Ye gaze on us, unclothed, unfed,
'Tis vain—ye will not hear our cry,
Nor give us daily bread.

We turn from you, our lords by birth,
To him who is our Lord above ;
We all are made of the same earth,
Are children of one love.

Then Father of this world of wonders !
Judge of the living and the dead !
Lord of the lightnings and the thunders,
Give us our daily bread.

Ernest Charles Jones.

1819—1869.

ERNEST CHARLES JONES, the Chartist advocate, leader, and poet, was born at Berlin, January 25th, 1819. His father, Major Charles Jones, had served with distinction in the Peninsular War, receiving a severe scalp wound at Sahagun. He was with Sir John Moore when that ill-fated commander was killed, and served under the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo. At the close of the war the Major remained upon the Continent, and became equerry to King Ernest, who afterwards stood sponsor to his son. Ernest Jones spent his early years at Holstein, on the borders of the Black Forest, where his father had bought an estate ; and in 1830, when only eleven years of age, "set out to help the Poles," then in insurrection, and was with difficulty traced in the Black Forest and brought back. He was educated at St. Michael's College, Lüneburg, where he was introduced by "letter patent" from the King. Here he worked with distinction, became Orator of the College, and on graduating delivered an address in German, which was published at the instance of the professors, who accorded him the highest academic honours.

In 1838 Major Jones removed with his family to England. In 1841 Ernest was presented at Court by the then Duke of Beaufort. He married a daughter

of Gibson Atherley, Esq., of Barfield, Cumberland; proceeded to the study of the law, and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple in 1844.

The next few years were full of excitement and change. He had everything in his favour had he been content to pursue a fashionable or a legal career; but the heart that stirred the boy of eleven to devote himself to the cause of the oppressed Poles still beat in his breast at twenty-five, and he could not withhold himself from the cause of the suffering poor. During 1845—1847 he visited many parts of England, speaking on all sorts of occasions to all sorts and conditions of men upon the politico-economic questions of the hour. In 1847, in conjunction with Edward Miall, he contested Halifax at the parliamentary election, but failed. In the following year he was arrested on a charge of sedition, and sentenced to two years' solitary confinement for making a speech which in our day, would have attracted no legal notice. In prison he seems to have been treated with unusual barbarity; was denied books, pens, ink, and paper, and was fed upon bread and water. Reduced to a state of utter prostration, he was removed to a hospital, where he was offered his freedom if he would but abjure politics; but he refused, and was sent back to prison. On his release he started a periodical entitled *Notes to the People*, in which he printed many poems and essays which he had composed while in prison. In 1852 he convened the "Labour Parliament" at Manchester; and in the following year contested Nottingham, but without success. 1856 saw him holding series of "Evenings with the People" at St. Martin's Hall, London; and 1857

making another futile attempt to represent Nottingham in Parliament. All this time he had been endeavouring to support himself by journalism, but his paper devoured all his resources, and his political campaigns left him no time for legal practice. His uncle offered to make him his heir, and leave him some £2,000 a year if he would renounce politics; but he refused, and the uncle left his money to his gardener. In the midst of his troubles he was attacked by *Reynolds's Newspaper*, and he had to defend himself against a charge of dishonesty. The result was a complete vindication, and a declaration by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn that his character was stainless. In 1861 he settled in Manchester, and devoted himself to the Bar with great success. His defence of the Fenians in 1867 brought him high praise from both Bench and Bar. In this year, too, he engaged in controversy with John Stuart Blackie, of Edinburgh, on the subject of Democracy. At the general election of 1868, Edinburgh, Carlisle, and Dewsbury, sought his candidature for parliamentary honours; but he determined to contest Manchester. He polled 10,662 votes, but failed. On the unseating of one of the elected members a test ballot was adopted, and he polled 3,000 more than Milner Gibson, the other nominee. The triumph, however, came too late. The sufferings he had undergone had enfeebled his constitution, and he died at the comparatively early age of fifty, on the 26th January, 1869.

Apart from his writings in *The Labourer*, *Notes to the People*, and *The People's Paper*, Ernest Jones published several volumes of verse, "The Battle Day" (1855), and "The Emperor's Vigil, and the Waves and the War" (1856), and "Coryda and other Poems"

(1860). His poem, "The Revolt of Hindostan, or the New World," which was written in prison in his own blood, was published in pamphlet form in 1857. His "Songs of Democracy" were also printed on fly-sheets, and circulated broadcast. It is difficult to imagine anything better for their purpose than these "Songs of Democracy." They lack the bitter intensity of the "Corn Law Rhymes" of Ebenezer Elliott; but in their simple directness are much better calculated for popular use.

Few men have sacrificed more for the good of others than Ernest Jones, and that without requital at the hands of those whom he sought to serve. His entire unselfishness and his unbounded sympathy with the down-trodden and oppressed are everywhere demonstrated in his career, and the large charity of his heart could hardly have better proof than that contained in the following lines written in prison:—

"They told me that my veins would flag,
My ardour would decay;
Heavily their fetters drag
My blood's young strength away.

* * *

"Oft to passion's stormy gale
When sleep I seek in vain,
Fleets of fancy up them sail,
And anchor in my brain.

"But never a wish for base retreat
Or thought of recent part,
While yet a single pulse shall beat
Proud marches in my heart.

"They'll find me still unchanged and strong
When breaks their puny thrall;
With hate for not one living soul—
And pity for them all."

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS.

(Written in prison, 1848-9.)

ERNEST JONES.

The following were written with pens made from rooks' feathers picked up by the poet in the prison yard, and shaped by the razor lent him for his toilet. His ink was stored in a piece of soap hollowed to receive it from the bottle supplied for the purposes of his quarterly letter, and the paper such as he was able to secrete at such times.

I.—HOPE.

GATE that never wholly closes,
Opening yet so oft in vain !
Garden full of thorny roses !
Roses fall, and thorns remain.
Wayward lamp, with flickering lustre
Shining far or shining near,
Seldom words of truth revealing,
Ever showing words of cheer.
Promise-breaker, yet unfailing !
Faithless flatterer ! comrade true !
Only friend, when traitor proven,
Whom we always trust anew.
Courtier strange, whom triumph frighteth,
Flying far from pleasure's eye,
Who by sorrow's side alighteth
When all else are passing by.
Syren singer ! ever chanting
Ditties new to burdens old ;
Precious stone the sages sought for,
Turning everything to gold !
True philosopher ! imparting
Comfort rich to spirits pained ;
Chider of proud triumph's madness,
Pointing to the unattained !
Timid warrior ! Doubt, arising,
Scares thee with the slightest breath.

Matchless chief! who, fear despising,
Tramples on the dart of death!
O'er the grave, past Time's pursuing,
Far thy flashing glory streams,
Too unswerving, too resplendent
For a child of idle dreams.
Still, life's fitful vigil keeping,
Feed the flame and trim the light:
Hope's the lamp I'll take for sleeping
When I wish the world good-night.

II.—THE POET'S PARALLEL.

DOWN the hillside tripping brightly,
O'er the pebbles tinkling lightly,
'Mid the meadows rippling merrily, the mountain
current goes;
By the broken rocks careering,
Thro' the desert persevering,
Flowing onward ever, ever singing as it flows.
But oh! the darksome caves
That swallow up the waves!
Oh! the shadow-haunted forest, and the sandy
shallows wide!
Oh! the hollow-reeded fen,
Like the stagnant minds of men,
A desert for the silver foot of mountain-cradled tide!
And oh! the withered leaves
From the fading forest-eaves,
Pressing on its forehead like the signet of decay;
And the cold cloud's troubling tear
On its crystal waters clear,
Like a haunting sorrow gliding down the future of
its way.

Oh ! the quick precipitous riot
That breaks upon its quiet,
When lingering by some shady bank in dream-
engendering rest !
Oh ! the stormy wind that mars
The image of the stars,
When they nestle, heavenly lovers, on their earthly
wooer's breast :

But the wild flowers love thy side ;
And the birds sing o'er thy tide ;
And the shy deer from the highlands confidingly
descends ;
And to thee, the son of care,
With a blessing and a prayer,
From life's great wildernesses in a thirsting spirit
wends.

And the fairies never seen
Come tripping o'er the green,
To gaze into thy mirror the livelong summer night ;
And the glory of the skies
That the blind earth idly eyes,
Fills the pulses of thy being with the fulness of its light.

III.—EARTH'S BURDENS.

“ **W**HY groaning so, thou solid earth,
Though sprightly summer cheers ?
Or is thine old heart dead to mirth ?
Or art thou bowed by years ? ”
“ Nor am I cold to summer's prime,
Nor knows my heart decay ;
Nor am I bowed by countless time,
Thou atom of a day !

- "I loved to list when tree and tide
Their gentle music made,
And lightly on my sunny side
To feel the plough and spade.
- "I loved to hold my liquid way
Through floods of living light ;
To kiss the sun's bright hand by day,
And count the stars by night.
- "I loved to hear the children's glee,
Around the cottage door,
And peasant's song right merrily
The glebe come ringing o'er.
- "But man upon my back has rolled
Such heavy loads of stone,
I scarce can grow the harvest gold :
'Tis therefore that I groan.
- "And when the evening dew sinks mild
Upon my quiet breast,
I feel the tear of the houseless child
Break burning on my rest.
- "Oh ! where are all the hallowed sweets,
The harmless joys I gave ?
The pavement of your sordid streets
Are stones on Virtue's grave.
- "And thick and fast as autumn leaves
My children drop away—
A gathering of unripened sheaves
By premature decay.
- "Gaunt misery holds the cottage door,
And olden honour's flown ;
And slaves are slavish more and more ;
'Tis therefore that I groan."

SONGS OF DEMOCRACY.

ERNEST JONES.

I.—SONG OF THE FACTORY SLAVE.

THE land it is the landlords';
The traders' is the sea;
The ore the usurers' coffer fills,
But what remains for me?
The engine whirls for master's craft,
The steel shines to defend,
With labour's arms, what labour raised,
For labour's foe to spend.
The camp, the pulpit, and the law,
For rich men's sons are free;
Theirs, theirs are learning, art, and arms;
But what remains for me?
The coming hope, the future day,
When wrong to right shall bow,
And hearts that have the courage, man,
To make that future *now*.
I pay for all their learning,
I toil for all their ease;
They render back in coin for coin,
Want, ignorance, disease:—
Toil—toil—and then, a cheerless home,
Where hungry passions cross;
Eternal gain to them, that give
To me eternal loss!
The hour of leisure happiness
The rich alone may see;
The playful child, the smiling wife—
But what remains for me?
The coming hope, the future day,
When wrong to right shall bow;
And hearts that have the courage, man,
To make that future *now*.

They render back, those rich men
A pauper's niggard fee,
Mayhap a prison—then a grave,
And think they're quits with me ;
But not a fond wife's heart that breaks—
A poor man's child that dies,
We score not on our hollow cheeks
And in our sunken eyes :
We read it there—whene'er we meet,
And as the sum we see,
Each asks—"the rich have got the earth,
And what remains for me ?"
The coming hope, the future day,
When wrong to right shall bow,
And hearts that have the courage, man,
To make that future *now*.

We bear the wrong in silence,
We store it in our brain ;
They think us dull—they think us dead :
But we shall rise again :
A trumpet through the lands will ring ;
A heaving thro' the mass ;
A trampling thro' their palaces,
Until they break like glass :
We'll cease to weep by cherished graves,
From lonely homes will flee,
And still as rolls our million-march,
Its watchword brave shall be :—
The coming hope—the future day
When wrong to right shall bow,
And hearts that have the courage, man,
To make that future *now*.

II.—THE SONG OF THE LOWER CLASSES.

WE plough and sow—we're so very, very low
That we delve in the dirty clay,
Till we bless the plain—with the golden grain,
And the vale with the fragrant hay.
Our place we know—we're so very low,
'Tis down at the landlord's feet :
We're not too low—the bread to grow,
But too low the bread to eat.

Down, down we go—we're so very, very low,
To the hell of the deep-sunk mines,
But we gather the proudest gems that glow
When the crown of a despot shines.
And whenever he lacks—upon our backs
Fresh loads he deigns to lay :
We're far too low to vote the tax,
But not too low to pay.

We're low—we're low—mere rabble, we know,
But at our plastic power,
The mould at the lordling's feet will grow
Into palace and church and tower—
Then prostrate fall—in the rich man's hall,
And cringe at the rich man's door :
We're not too low to build the wall,
But too low to tread the floor.

We're low—we're low—we're very, very low,
Yet from our fingers glide
The silken flow—and the robes that glow
Round the limbs of the sons of pride.
And what we get—and what we give,
We know, and we know our share :
We're not too low the cloth to weave,
But too low the cloth to wear !

We're low—we're low—we're very, very low,
And yet when the trumpets ring,
The thrust of a poor man's arm will go
Thro' the heart of the proudest king.
We're low—we're low—our place we know,
We're only the rank and file,
We're not too low—to kill the foe,
But too low to touch the spoil.

III.—THE SONG OF THE DAY-LABOURERS.

SHARPEN the sickle, the fields are white ;
'Tis the time of the harvest at last.
Reapers, be up with the morning-light,
Ere the blush of its youth be past.
Why stand on the highway and lounge at the gate,
With a summer day's work to perform ?
If you wait for the hiring 'tis long you may wait—
Till the hour of the night and the storm.
Sharpen the sickle ; how proud they stand
In the pomp of their golden grain !
But I'm thinking, ere noon 'neath the sweep of my hand
How many will lie on the plain !
Though the ditch be wide, the fence be high,
There's a spirit to carry us o'er,
For God never meant his people to die
In sight of so rich a store.
Sharpen the sickle ; how full the ears !
Our children are crying for bread !
And the field has been watered with orphans' tears
And enriched with their fathers dead ;
And hopes that are buried, and hearts that broke,
Lie deep in the treasuring sod :
Then sweep down the grain with a thunderstroke,
In the name of humanity's God !

THE WAVES AND THE WAR.

1856,

ERNEST JONES.

I.—THE BALTIC FLEET.

HE would not let them rest
On the waters of the West,
Where they slumbered in their bays—those sons of
England's might—
With their great white shadowy shrouds,
Folded calm as brooding clouds,
Dreaming of old victories in the drowsy summer light.

He would not let them rest,
Those war-ships of the West,
The Czar of sullen Muscovy in drunkenness of pride ;
And they gather now and throng
The beautiful and strong,
Like a fairy pageant floating for a pastime on the tide.

They toy and they play
With the waters on their way ;
They tack and they veer, as if in sport upon the sea ;
But evermore they write
In those furrows creamy-white,
Our messages of ruin to thine empire and to thee.

The gentle ocean laughed
To the countless pleasure-craft,
That with music and with joyousness came dancing
in delight ;
And, as though 'twere a caress,
Round the mighty ships they press,
As you cheer a gallant charger ere it rushes to the fight

But a sudden change was wrought,
For the mass a signal caught,
And feverish expectation hung lead-like on each
breath ;

Deep silence sank around,
And the crowds stood wonder-bound,
Till they scarcely felt the ocean pulsing heavily
beneath.

Then o'er those myriads mute
Slow rolled the last salute ;
A white cloud started upward, hiding ships, and sea,
and sky ;

And a thunder ebbed away
Over inland, shore and bay,
Forth flinging to the universe a nation's battle-cry.

The far hills throb around
With the wide o'erwhelming sound ;
The waves are prostrate laid, like a solid glassy floor
Then they crisp again and rear,
With pale foam white as fear,
And shivering, in long moaning lines creep slowly
to the shore.

The thin cloud disappears
In a shower of sudden tears—
Or is it angels weeping o'er the thought of coming
woes!—

And a prophet-hue of blood
Flits flickering o'er the flood,
And a sobbing and a sighing is heard around the
bows.

Then each one held his breath,
For he knew the voice of death ;
A sense of solemn sorrow sank hushing far and wide

And a vision dim of graves
'Mid lonely shores and waves,
And silent, hopeless evenings by a desolate fireside.

But the graceful sails arose
Like a drift of mountain-snows,
And the steam-ship, like a war-horse, came trampling
down the brine ;
And hearts again beat fast
To see them as they passed—
The cavalry of ocean, and the slow-paced sailing line.

'Twas thus we bade them go
To seek our country's foe ;
Not in doubting or in fearing did the nation send
them forth ;
'Twas a people's holiday
To greet their brave array,
And a sound of joyous cheering went behind them
to the North.

II.—THE SAILOR'S NIGHT WATCH.

WHAT steals upon the midnight ?
What walks across the wave,
' Where the moon's long light-path stretches o'er
The sailor's sullen grave,
Like a bridge that is built by angels,
The sinking soul to save !

One end at the ship-side resteth,
And one is held afar—
Far—far in the lands of heaven and home,
By the hand of the Evening Star :
And my thoughts travel over and linger
Where those that I love so are !

And then, in the stilly midnight,
Sweet forms come tripping o'er,
For I see at the end of that ray of light
My home on a pleasant shore,
And my dear one lonely and sad within,
And my child at the cottage-door.

Their eyes are turned towards me,
And I beckon them to my side ;
I beckon them up with the pulse of my heart,
And they come o'er the ocean wide,
On that delicate path that the angels made
For the feet of my sorrowing bride.

And she sitteth here beside me,
And she telleth of love and home,
And she placeth her hand in mine, with a touch
As light as the milky foam :
I dare not look, but I know she is there,
And my thoughts to their haven roam.

And such words she whispers to me,
Through mine inmost soul they flow :
“ They will ask me at home if my love was brave,
They will look in my face to know ;
While I cry to Heaven ; ‘ Oh, spare us, Lord !
As he spared the prostrate foe.’ ”

The wave rolls over the sea—
The cloud glides over the sky—
And the spell-bound vision of beauty and love
Breaks—breaks with a sudden sigh ;
But bless'd be the watch of the midnight
That lifted my heart more high.

John Westland Marston.

1819—1890.

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON was born at Boston, Lincolnshire, on the 30th of January, 1819, and came to London in 1834, being articled clerk to an uncle, who was in business as a solicitor.

His father was a dissenting minister, and he had been strictly, if not puritanically, brought up; his parents, as he himself tells us, never mentioning the stage, "except to warn me or others of its dangers and seductions." No doubt this was one of the causes of the early and lasting attraction which the theatre had for him.

Little record of his early years remains, but it is clear that in a comparatively short space of time young Marston managed to obtain a footing in society of a more or less literary description. An old diary of 1838 makes mention of a lecture which he had published, and among his friends at this date appear several well-known literary men; while, furthermore, on September 29th, he chronicles the fact that he is "appointed Secretary of the Pestalozzian Association." He seems not to have been burdened with work during the day, and he admits that in the evening he had "more liberty of action than was quite suitable in the case of so mere a boy." This liberty was mostly devoted to studying the contemporary drama from the pits of theatres, and it is

therefore not surprising to find that in 1841 he published a blank-verse play, with a dedication to W. C. Macready, then manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and at the height of his fame. But the rest of the story of "*The Patrician's Daughter*" is like a romance. Macready read the play, liked it, persuaded Dickens to write a prologue for it, and produced it at "the Lane," acting the chief character himself. Much curiosity was aroused, there were long discussions in the papers, and though great difference of opinion was manifested as to the merits of the piece, and especially as to the character of the hero, Marston's reputation was made. He was hailed as the herald of a new school: romantic sentiment in sonorous blank verse was now to be allied with the chimney-pot hat and the parasol, and the drama was somehow to be greatly "elevated" thereby.

It is worth while, perhaps, to note here that a few months before the publication of his play, Marston himself married a patrician's daughter, namely Miss Eleanor Jane Potts, a connection of the family of Lord Mayo. It may also not be amiss to mention that the young lady's friends were not more anxious for her to marry a genius than were the aristocratic relatives of Marston's heroine, Lady Mabel Lynterne.

The doubly fortunate author does not seem to have followed up his first success with any great vigour. He published in 1842 a slim volume called "*Gerald and Other Poems*"; but "*Gerald*" only serves to remind us that "*Festus*" had appeared two years before, and the "*Other Poems*" are weak; while it was not until 1847 that his next drama,

"The Heart and the World," was produced at the Haymarket. It proved a total failure, and Marston himself confessed it to be undeserving of success. In 1849, however, came what is perhaps his best play, "Strathmore." Here Marston laid aside his mission for the time, with the happiest results. The action passes in Scotland, at the period of the Covenanting troubles; the plot is full of strongly romantic situations, and the author shows that he is quite capable of sustaining his voice at the requisite height, without bathos on the one hand or bombast on the other. In "Anne Blake" (1852) the author returned once more to modern life, but there is little to be said in favour of the play or its heroine. It is a relief to turn to "Marie de Meranie," which was Marston's next work. The plot is derived from the story of Philip Augustus, King of France, who divorced his wife in order to marry the heroine, and was consequently excommunicated by the Pope, whom he thereupon defied. This is a stirring tragedy, the verse of which has an appropriately martial ring; while the characters of both Marie and Philip are well sustained throughout. Marie, in particular, is a noble and pathetic figure, and it is not surprising that Miss Helen Faucit should have made a great impression in the part. Next year, viz. 1857, appeared "A Life's Ransom," another romantic play in verse; and in 1858 the little prose drama "A Hard Struggle" was performed at the Lyceum. On this excellent bit of work we cannot do better than quote from Dickens's letter to the author: "I most heartily and honestly congratulate you on your charming little piece. It moved me more than I could easily tell you if I were to try. . . .

I am at a loss to let you know how much I admired it last night, or how heartily I cried over it. A touching idea most delicately conceived, and wrought out by a true artist and poet in a spirit of noble, manly generosity that no one should be able to study without great emotion."

After this came at short intervals "The Wife's Portrait," "Pure Gold" (a prose play), "Donna Diana" (an adaptation from the German), and in 1866 "The Favourite of Fortune" (a prose comedy) was acted at the Haymarket, with Mr. Sothorn in the chief part. It was a new departure for Marston, and a highly successful one. The dialogue is exceptionally polished, brilliant, and telling; the comedy never degenerates into farce, nor the wit into rudeness, and the interest is well maintained from beginning to end. There is one fault, however, —a Sothorn is required to play the hero, and he is often hard to find.

"Life for Life" was written for Miss Neilson, at her special request, and produced at the Lyceum in 1869. It contains many powerful situations, and a large quantity of sounding blank verse; but it may be doubted whether its spectre and secret passage and disguised minstrel are devices worthy of the author. However, it successfully fulfilled its object, which was to provide Miss Neilson with a highly coloured romantic character. After "Life for Life" Dr. Marston gave nothing to the stage for many years, and so it was not surprising that his last comedy, produced at the Vaudeville Theatre in 1886, proved a failure. Dr. Marston and the world had by this time retired from each other to a great extent, and comedy, at any rate, is not to be achieved by a recluse.

To sum up, Dr. Marston was a careful, conscientious, and capable literary artist, and all his plays will repay reading for this reason alone. His sentiments are invariably noble and chivalrous; there is a ring of Corneille about his voice at times, and the thrice-famous "*Qu'il mourût!*" of "*Horace*" has a sort of parallel in "*Strathmore*," when the hero appeals to his lover to decide whether he shall sign a shameful recantation to save his life, and she replies, "*No—die!*" He had also great constructive skill; he understood how to work up a situation; he was no amateur; and he always writes like a gentleman and a scholar. But, on the other hand, he cannot be said to have possessed any great power of characterisation. His heroes and heroines bear a family likeness to each other; his minor characters do not stand out boldly from the background; above all, his villains are an intolerably feeble folk. The necessary result of this limitation is that his dramas depend for their interest more upon mere external accidents than upon the development of character which should accompany these. His attempt to popularise dramas of modern everyday life, written in ambitious blank verse, was naturally a failure, and he himself had practically relinquished the idea long before his theatrical career was ended.

It is of course by his dramatic works that he must stand or fall; but some of those best qualified to judge think that he had at least equal claims as a critic; and, indeed, his last and perhaps most wholly delightful book, "*Recollections of our Recent Actors*," is worthy to take rank with Hazlitt's "*Dramatic Essays*." Besides his dramas he published a novel,

"A Lady in Her Own Right," in 1860, and a collection of short stories. His lyrical and occasional poems are comparatively few, and are not, as a rule, equal to his other work; though three or four sonnets, written in the latter years of his life, may be excepted from this criticism.

Personally, Dr. Marston was a delightful companion—genial, courteous, polished, and a brilliant talker. For about ten years, between 1860 and 1870, his house in Northumberland Terrace was on Sunday evenings a rendezvous for the best literary and dramatic society of London. In 1863 the University of Glasgow gave him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, and he might at this period have been regarded with envy as a prosperous and successful man. But misfortunes crowded thickly upon him in his latter years. His wife died in 1870, and his circumstances became more or less involved. Then, one by one, his two daughters and his son, the well-known poet and story writer, Philip Bourke Marston, the old man's chief pride, followed their mother to the grave. Thus bereft, his closing years could not be other than mournful; they might have also been poverty-stricken, but his friends did not fail him, and in 1887 a performance of *Werner* at the Lyceum Theatre for his benefit realised more than a thousand pounds. He was thus raised above want for the short remainder of his life, thanks to the efforts of his friends, Mr. Henry Irving, Mr. J. L. Toole, Mr. Joseph Knight, and other members of that profession with which he had been so long and honourably connected. He died January 5th, 1890, a few days before attaining his seventy-first year.

HERBERT E. CLARKE.

STRATHMORE.

1849.

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE IV.)

SIR RUPERT'S TRIAL.

Sir Rupert. WHAT would you with me ?

Strathmore. The chance of these stern times,
when savage power

Tramples on life and freedom, makes us foes,

Not to yourself, but wrong which you abet.

That wrong to curb, we have possessed your castle,

And held you in restraint. No penalty

Harsher than this impends, if you confute,

As I must hope you will, a crime so black

Your name denies it credence ! You are charged

That, not in heat of war or private feud,

By you and yours, unarmed and simple men,

In exercise devout, were foully slain.

No warning given, no order to disperse—

A right which even your cruel laws demand—

And, chief, that by your hand fell Andrew Keith,

The gracious shepherd of this ravaged fold !

What answer make you ?

[SIR RUPERT *regards him in stern silence.*

Craig. He is dumb.

Strath. Produce

Your evidence.

Sir R. Hold there. (To HAMILTON and CRAIG-
BURN.) I speak

Not to this man—perjured to king, name, friend,

Whose baseness Heaven permits that men may
 know,
 And loathe a traitor ;—but to your more human
 And moderate infamies. Hear this ! I mourned,—
 A sickly fool !—because his locks were white,
 The death of Andrew Keith ; but now, beholding
 The pestilent harvest of his seed, rejoice,
 Both that I mowed the ear and slew the sower.
 The deed was mine, I slew him !

Ham. He avows it !

Craig. Justice !

Sol. Ay, justice ! we'll have justice !

Strath. Who

Calls upon justice, and with clamour wakes
 Her sacred halls, that should be hushed as heaven,
 Ere doom's dread book be opened ? Peace ! Sir
 Rupert,

If, guiltless of this crime, it be avowed
 In hasty scorn, or from security,
 Since I have been your friend—reflect, recant !
 My heart is frozen—and it cannot beat ;
 My memory stifled—and it cannot plead ;
 I am a pen in the great hand of Conscience,
 To write its bidding merely !

Sir R. (To HAMILTON and CRAIGBURN.) Pray
 interpret

Me to your master. Tell him that we rate
 Gifts by the givers ; that could he give me life,
 I would not own it, branded by his pity !

Bryce. Pshaw, pshaw, you rave !

Sir R. Place me upon the heath,
 My good sword in my gripe ! The deed I've done
 I'll do again, and grind beneath my heel
 This brood of canting priests and armed revolt !

Sol. His sentence ! Quick, his sentence !

Ham. By his own lips

Is he condemned. For further proof we hold
This letter, written by the prisoner,
And found upon his servant. 'Tis addressed
Unto that man of wrath, Ralph Malcolm ! Listen !
(*Reads.*) " These, good friends, shall bring you to
know that I have been entrapped by a gang of
Puritan traitors. If you can give the alarm, and send
help, well. Once free, on the faith of a loyal man,
I will show the knaves no mercy. I will hunt them
down, whether they bear sword or psalter, by the
hearth or in the field, in conventicle or by the hill-
side.—Yours in the king's cause, RUPERT LORN."

[*Gives letter to STRATHMORE.*]

Sol. Vengeance ! Tear him to pieces ! Judgment !
Sentence !

Bryce. Sheer lunacy ! You would not heed a
maniac ;

Try fasting and the dungeon.

Ham. Ay, and wait

Until some rescue, mightier than our stop,
Loose him to carnage. We are weak ; our foes
Are strong, and may redeem him. Strathmore,
think ;

'Tis not alone the life that he has quenched,
But those his cruel purpose yearns to strike,
That claim his death ! If they through him expire,
Thy voice that frees him murders them ! Then,
stand

Between this black soul and thy brethren's lives,
And tell us which shall perish !

Sol. Justice ! Death !

Strath. That shout again. (*To SIR RUPERT.*) List to that shout, old man!

I hear it and I live ; but do not check it !

Who dares ? Who stays the planets or arrests

The wheels of destiny ? They roll, they roll !

[*He rises and comes forward.*

Ham. (*To CRAIGBURN.*) He's rapt as in a trance. (*To STRATHMORE.*) What hear'st thou, brother ?

Strath. (*To SIR RUPERT.*) The cry of thy great sin, performed and purposed,
Has entered heaven, and space reverberates
Thy doom in thunder ! Murder's doom is death !

Craig. (*To SIR RUPERT.*) Thy sentence ! (*To STRATHMORE.*) And it's hour ?

Ham. He does not heed thee.
Remove the prisoner. Thy farewell take
Of earth to-day ! Thou diest on the morrow !

[*SIR RUPERT goes out guarded, followed by BRYCEFIELD and Soldiers. STRATHMORE remains standing in abstraction.*

Ham. (*To STRATHMORE.*) My friend ! my brother !

Craig. Pray you speak not to him.
Leave him to silence.

Ham. Oh, this sacrifice
Outweighed a thousand lives ; my friend ! my friend !

[*HAMILTON and CRAIGBURN go out.*

Strath. Where am I ? Is this earth or has the world

Swerved from its path in terror, and recoiled
To the first chaos ? Is yon light the sun ?
Are those green hills ? And is yon roar that swells,
And sinks and swells, the sea ? That's the oak roof ;

A slanting sunbeam strikes it. I stand here,
Alone ; yet do not turn, lest fearful shapes
Should give the lie to sense. Alone ! ah, see,
That old man stalks before me ! Speak ? I'll
answer.

He's dumb. And now from the quick-breeding air
There looms another form—dark, stern—my father's !
He points to him, and asks me for his friend !
And 'twixt the two there glides a cold face, blanched
With a child's agony ! Katharine, away !
I cannot bear those eyes ! (*Rallying himself.*) Nay,
gaze ! I'll front them.—

Dim spectres of the living and the dead
Cite me, impeach me ! As I then shall answer,
When Heaven waits breathless, and its shining
ranks

Fix me at once with their demanding eyes,
I answer now. Truth has no choice : it must
Be true or not be ! Duty claimed my heart ;
I plucked it forth and gave ! . . . Ah, now ye fade—
I am alone—alone with fate and heaven !

[*He stands motionless. The Curtain slowly
descends.*]

MARIE DE MERANIE.

1856.

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON.

ACT III., SCENE IV.

EXCOMMUNICATION OF KING PHILIP.

Council Chamber in the Palace.

Bishops, Nobles, etc., etc. Torchlight.

B. of Paris. (Apart to other Bishops.)

I F me to this stern office ye depute,
I claim support most absolute.

A. of Rheims.

You have it.

I speak for all.

B. of Paris. No fear, no compromise, but be your port
As dauntless as the bane ye would avert
Is quick and awful. Firm, united stand !
I doubt the laity, and know the sway
This subtle yet rash king doth exercise
O'er martial spirits. [*A flourish of trumpets.*

Enter PHILIP; with Attendants. He ascends the throne

Phil.

Greeting kind to all.

'Tis late ; but ever should a people's need
Make a king's season. To the issue, friends !
I know that peril threatens.

B. of Paris.

It may strike,

Sire, while we plot to shun it. Let the knell
Of Rome's dread wrath but sound, and France is lost !
Her guardian saints desert her ; in her streets
A curse alights on labour ; in her plains
Withers her harvest ; warps her policy ;
In war makes her sword edgeless, and her shield
'Gainst the first lance to break ; chokes in her fanes
The very breath of prayer ; unto her dying
Denies the rites and solace of the Church,
And burial to her dead ! Sweet Providence—
When daily sent by Heaven to bless the world—

Shall make her pilgrimage circuitous
Rather than cross this kingdom ! Wrath divine,
Like doom, hangs o'er the realm, upon whose brow
Earth shall write infamy, and God—despair !

Phil. 'Tis well : the woes ye so much lay to heart
Ye will be prompt to remedy.

A. of Rheims.

Alas !

With us no succour rests.

B. of Paris.

'Tis the king's task.

Phil. The king's and yours. The marriage you annulled.
Upon your oaths—the Pontiff would enforce
By spiritual menace. He commands ;
Obedience rests with you. Disown his sentence ;
Abjure his unjust vengeance ; let the Church
Through you her holy offices dispense
Spite of his edict ! Then his ban falls harmless.

B. of Paris. What ! Wouldst thou have us,
prelates of the Church,
Defy the Church's head ? 'Twere vain as impious ;
We may not question Rome's prerogative.

Phil. You may not palter with your sworn
allegiance.

Your oaths !—I have your oaths.

B. of Paris.

All bonds are void

That Rome annuls ; allegiance' self is void

In this behalf.

A. of Rheims. Sire ! Your late union— [*Hesitating.*

B. of Paris. Your cancelled union with the Lady Marie—

Phil. Paris ! The foe has been held bold who broke
His lance on Philip's buckler ; yet he's bolder
Who'd snatch from Philip's arms the love he clasps
Unto his naked breast !

B. of Paris. Even that love

Must thou renounce ! 'Tis Rome that speaks through me.

A. of Rheims. My liege, the Pope—

Phil. The Pope, my lords! Four letters!—things,
not names!

The Pope! Did earth receive him from the stars;
Or sprang he from the ocean? Did the sun
Wake earlier on his birthday? Will eclipse
Turn the skies sable at his death? He came
Into this world by nature's common road,
Needs food to succour life, is chilled by cold,
Relaxed by heat, would drown in a rough sea
Soon as a serf would!—Let him ban the fields,—
The grass will grow in spite of him!

B. of Paris.

Impiety!

Bear'st thou that front so boldly?

Phil.

I will speak.

Man's love—the growth of heaven—of nought below
Admits control. Heaven's ministers should know it!

1st Noble. True; by the Oriflamme!

2nd Noble.

Upon my knighthood,

We shame ourselves to see this lady shamed!

3rd Noble. Than whom did none more gracious
e'er tread earth.

My lords, you are miscounselled! [*To the Bishops.*

B. of Paris.

What, are you

Revolters too? Then—

[*Bells are heard to toll, and continue to toll at short
and regular intervals throughout the scene.*

Hark! the time is past,

The time for duty. King! those sounds declare
Thy land cursed for thy sake. With it and thee
The heavens break off their league. Wherefore on earth
We lay the sacred symbol of our faith
In token of the grace profaned and lost!

[*They lower the crucifix.*

Submission and repentance—deep, entire
Are all that now remain.

*[A long pause, during which the tolling
of the bells is alone heard.]*

An Officer. Way there ; the queen !

Enter MARIE, followed by her ladies.

Marie. Philip, my lord ! What mean those
fearful sounds ?

Like echoes of pale Death's advancing tread
They drove me to thine arms, and I am safe.

*[She rushes to the steps of the throne ; at
a sign from PHILIP, she takes her
place at his side.]*

But thou ?—Speak ! Has my love provoked the curse ?
The lone tree that would yield thee grateful shade
Attracts the lightnings now ! Is it so ?

B. of Paris. Ay ;

For thee he stands accursed.

[A pause ; the bells are again heard.]

Phil. Peal on ! we hear.

Mark me, ye mitred oath-breakers ! But raise
One finger, move one step, or breathe one word
In furtherance of this cause—and ye shall beg
For leave to beg. Of rank, revenue, power,
We dispossess you, cast you forth from France,
Wherein if found against command, you die !
Nobles, ring round the throne !

B. of Paris. Back from that chair !

Marie. Philip !

Phil. On your allegiance !

B. of Paris. To the Church !

Phil. Mayenne !

I flung the knighthood's spurs ere well thy neck
Had lost the page's pliant curve. Dumont !

I knew thee when thine arms and steed composed
Thy sum of fortune. De Latour ! we fought
Abreast at Palestine. [*Shouts and tumult heard without.*

Enter GUÉRIN.

Guer. My liege, all Paris
Shrieks wildly at your gates !

B. of Paris. (*To the Nobles.*) Hear, gallant sons !
On your souls' love, break up that fatal ring.

[*They fall back from the throne.*

Phil. (*To Nobles.*) And you desert me ? Traitors !

B. of Paris. Thou art left
Alone, lost man ; know haughtier crests than thine
Have crouched to Rome.

Phil. (*Passionately, and descending a step.*)

Crouched, vassal ? (*With scornful laughter
as the Bishop falls back.*) Guérin, look,

Yon pale-faced monk talks to the king of crouching !
(*To Bishops and Nobles.*) Deem ye my sires, whose
tombs were glory's shrines,
Have left their sceptre to a bastard hand,
That I should crouch ?—Speak ! plains of Asia, speak !
That saw me single cleave through paynim hordes,
As I had wrung Death's truncheon from his gripe !
Speak for me, rescued bondsmen ! speak for me,
Fierce vassals who have knelt to take my yoke,
You, you, and you !—No perjured priest ! had Fate
Lent her polluted lightnings to your hands,
Even as you boast, I'd bid you rain your fires
On an unshrinking front. I'd fall a king !
Way, there ! Sweep back this tide of yeasty froth,
That where we pass no spray profane our robes.
Way there, I say—THE QUEEN OF FRANCE would pass !
Come ! [*To MARIE,*

Marie. Not a step.

Phil. How ?

Marie. Not to thy ruin.

B. of Paris. Away ; all to your homes ! His doom is sealed.

Who stays to parley with his guilt, partakes it.

Marie. Yield, Philip, yield ! Stay, I command you stay ! *[To the Bishops.*

The king is saved—is saved ! You little knew The queen you would degrade. Take back thy crown.

[Takes off the crown, and kneeling, lays it at PHILIP'S feet.

Take back the oath thou gav'st me, thou art free, And I no more thy wife !

[She descends from the throne.

Phil. (following her). What hast thou said ? Marie forsakes me ! Canst thou ?

Marie. Yes, to save thee.

Phil. To save ?—to crush me.

Marie. Philip, grant one boon, And I remain. Unto the Pope appeal, Or those he shall appoint, to judge our cause. Plead with them thy divorce, thy right to wed me, Owned by these prelates. Then, whate'er the sentence, Thou must abide it. Pledge thy word.

Phil. I pledge it. My lords, you stand dismissed.

B. of Paris. My liege—

Phil. Dismissed !

[Impetuously embracing MARIE, as the rest retire. They soon shall kiss thy feet ! (Bells are still heard to toll.) Ay, clamour on,

Vain tongues of doom ! Marie is still—

Marie (clinging to him). Thy wife !

SONNETS.

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON.

I.—MINE.

IN that tranced hush when sound sank awed to rest,
Ere from her spirit's rose-red, rose-sweet gate
Came forth to me her royal word of fate,
Did she sigh "Yes," and droop upon my breast ;
While round our rapture, dumb, fixed, unexpressed
By the seized senses, there did fluctuate
The plaintive surges of our mortal state,
'Tempering the poignant ecstasy too blest.

Do I wake into a dream, or have we twain,
Lured by soft wiles to some unconscious crime,
Dared joys forbid to man ? Oh, Light supreme,
Upon our brows transfiguring glory rain,
Nor let the sword of thy just angel gleam
On two who entered heaven before their time !

II.—IMMORTALITY: AN INFERENCE.

IF I had lived ere seer or priest unveiled
A life to come, methinks that, knowing thee,
I should have guessed thine immortality ;
For Nature, giving instincts, never failed
To give the ends they point to. Never quailed
The swallow, through air-wilds, o'er tracts of sea,
To chase the summer ; seeds that prisoned be
Dream of and find the daylight. Unassailed
By doubt, impelled by yearnings for the main,
The creature river-born doth there emerge ;
So thou, with thoughts and longings which our earth
Can never compass in its narrow verge,
Shalt the fit region of thy spirit gain,
And death fulfil the promptings of thy birth.

John Ruskin.

1819.

THE remark is no new one that there is more poetry in Mr. Ruskin's prose than in most people's verse. It would be an injustice to a hundred other noble passages to name one or two in which grace and energy of thought, musical and felicitous wording, exquisite art and passionate emotion combine to raise a picturesque description or an ethical reflection far out of the range of mere prose. But it has not commonly been known that his singular power was cultivated at the first, and for many years, by verse-writing in the recognised forms; and it is worth noting, in view of the recurrent controversy on the value of poet's prose, that he, like our other modern stylists, Cardinal Newman and Matthew Arnold, began with verse.

John Ruskin was born at Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, London, on February 8th, 1819, of Scottish extraction. He was a precocious child of genius, making rhymes as soon as he could speak, and books as soon as he could write. He was fortunate in being an only child, and a solitary one; for he found leisure and opportunity to indulge his fancy, and eager encouragement from his parents. They are said to have let him earn his pocket-money by his productions; and he saved up his earnings to pay for the education of a young lad, who after-

wards became his amanuensis. From the age of six or seven his pen was busy with every sort of subject,—comedy or tragedy suggested by his reading; scenes of travel and domestic incidents, which are often curiously interesting, because, while we have plenty of poems written *for* children, setting forth the pleasures and troubles of childhood, we have not many poems *by* children, describing their affections and employments, their parents, tutors and pets, from their own point of view. And these early attempts are distinguished by touches of penetrative thought and real feeling not often expressed in the literature of infants.

One of his earliest copies of verse, "Papa, how pretty those icicles are," written at the age of eight, has been repeatedly quoted. A blank-verse fragment, entitled "Happiness," and probably suggested by Young's "Night Thoughts," has caught to perfection the sonorous didacticism of his model. But most of his earliest writing is imitated from Scott, who was the favourite author of his father, and made familiar to him by nightly readings in that drawing-room at Herne Hill, with which readers of "*Præterita*," the author's autobiography, are so well acquainted. In Ruskin's case natural talents, inherited dispositions, a careful training and generous circumstances combined, more happily than in many poets' lives, to produce the man,—and to ripen him at an age when most of us are hardly out of boyhood.

Among these fostering circumstances not the least important were the frequent and varied travels on which he accompanied his parents. The great bulk of his early verse records his impressions of the

scenery of Scotland and the Lake district, France, Italy, and the Alps. From the beginning he seems to have felt a most intense enthusiasm for mountains,—an enthusiasm which he was destined to communicate to many a reader of his maturer works. But even at the age of thirteen or fourteen he could write the lyric—

“ I weary for the torrent leaping
From off the scar’s rough crest”—

which was printed at the head of his collected poems—with its concluding stanza reminiscent of his request to Northcote, at the age of three, to paint “blue hills” in his portrait; and prophetic of many a noble description, down to that written only the other year, in “*Præterita*,” of the Alps from Schaffhausen:—

“ There is a thrill of strange delight
That passes quivering o’er me,
When blue hills rise upon the sight
Like summer clouds before me.”

But his verses were not only descriptive of mountains. At the age of twelve, he came under the spell of Byron, and caught something of the rhetorical art, the secret of combining seriousness and humour, in both of which he sympathised with “the noble poet.” His poem on the miseries of “Bedtime” recalls the metre of “Don Juan”; his “Babylon” and “Destruction of Pharaoh,” are modelled on the “Hebrew Melodies”; and some of the sonnets of 1831-32 have a singular maturity of feeling and volume of expression,—notably the “Harlech Castle,” and “To a Cloud.” And the stanza on the “Barberry-tree” in his poetical journal of 1835,

with other passages, shows what he would have done in this direction if he had been left to follow his natural bent in verse-writing.

But in the meantime he had become a magazine-writer : he published fragments of his work, polished up and filed down into propriety, in *Friendship's Offering*, under the patronage of Thomas Pringle and James Hogg and W. H. Harrison. He had naturally an imperfect ear for rhyme, though his rhythm was always right ; and his advisers, with a not unreasonable pedantry, seem to have pressed upon him the necessity of correctness above everything. Add to this that he went to Oxford, and competed for the Newdigate Prize Poem ; tried to satisfy critics and censors ; distrusted his own taste ;—people who talk of " Ruskin's Egoism " little know how that quality, whatever it be, is mingled in him with diffidence and modesty and a quite unusual submissiveness to the opinion of anybody who happens to be near him. But this, though it took the bloom off his youthful genius, was a good training, and there was native vigour in him enough to survive the schooling : he won the Newdigate with " Salsette and Elephanta," a purely academic production ; and his " Scythian Grave," a queer nightmare suggested by Herodotus, attained considerable popularity at the time.

Another disturbing influence which broke up the even flow of his development was the study of Shelley, whom he tried to imitate in wild love-poems to a Spanish-Parisian young lady, upon whom his first affections were fixed. Of these the " Farewell," written in September 1839, is the most characteristic. It is full of Shelleyan imagery and

word-painting; as good as any derivative art can be: but it is not Ruskin. "The Broken Chain," a long story of love and romance, published, like the other poems of these years, in *Friendship's Offering*, has similar merits, and artfully combines the vein of Coleridge's "Christabel" with Shelleyan turns of phrase and thought. In his earnest attempt to do what he thought his literary duty he even wrote poems to order, to illustrate plates in his friends' publications. The "Psammenitus," "The Two Paths,"—a title afterwards recalled to use for a volume of his lectures—the "Waterwheel," "The Departed Light," and several others were thus produced,—poems on occasion, and hardly representing his genuine powers.

His genuine powers were at that time beginning to show themselves in prose. He had published scientific notes at the age of fourteen; and his contributions on architecture were printed, applauded, solicited in the leading art-magazines, while he was an undergraduate. Now, after leaving Oxford, invalided, and threatened with consumption, he set himself to write a treatise on the principles of art in general, and the practice of Turner in particular; which was published in 1843 under the name of "Modern Painters." What took the world by storm, and has held it ever since, was the wonderful power of descriptive writing, which is shown in many passages of the work. There is much beyond and beside; but the descriptions appeal to every one: and they could hardly be better done. They are poems in prose; and they are the result of his years of descriptive versification. This is not the place to point the moral; but it is not without interest to all

parents of youthful prodigies to note the result of stimulating encouragement ; nor without a lesson to young aspirants to mark the value of incessant application, continual practice in recording impressions and observations, earnest devotion to the study of literary form as an art, as an end in itself, even to the apparent self-effacement of writing magazine verses to order, and of deliberate imitation of existing standards. Ruskin's own self-training in literature was exactly that which he has pointed out in Turner's art-education,—the eager rivalry with known masters, and the diligent application which let slip no chance of work, never mind what was the praise or the pay it promised.

After publishing the first volume of "*Modern Painters*," he did not give up verse : and the assured position as a writer which he felt himself to have attained reflects itself in the few poems of 1844 and 1845. He had been verging upon a style of his own just before going to Oxford—before the Shelley-fever had seized him, before the fear of editors and examiners had arisen in his view. Now again he is himself in his verses. "*The Walk in Chamouni*," "*Mont Blanc Revisited*"—his most popular and frequently copied poem,—his "*Mont Blanc*," "*The Alps from Marengo*," "*Arve at Cluse*," "*Lines written in the Basses Alpes*," and "*The Glacier*" reach a high level of powerful expression, thought and feeling interpenetrating as they do only in the best work of the best men. But with these his "poetical" activity ends. He could say what he wanted in the style which he had made for himself, rhythmic and passionate,—poetry such as the Psalms of David are, or the Prophecies of Isaiah, or any

that does not conform to the rules of Classical or Teutonic rhythm and rhyme.

And one thing he wanted to say was this :—that all poetry, whether expressed in rhythmic words or in the shapes and colours of formative art, deserves far more respect than the world usually accords to it. He has pointed out that Beauty in any sort is the obvious manifestation of Divine Law ; and that the true poet, in setting forth that Beauty, is a prophet, *sacer vates*, an exponent of the Divine intention ; even though he may be but a Saul among the prophets. Such a doctrine could hardly be preached by one who himself posed as a poet or a painter. Mr. Ruskin laid no claim to any inspiration for himself ; he was content to glorify the work of others. When he gave up versifying it was not because he had failed in it ; though he has often laughed at some of his less original and more openly derivative juvenile verses, and regretted the haste which led him into their premature publication. He has warned young people against rushing into verse, just as he has warned them against setting themselves up for artists, before they really understand and appreciate the masterpieces of acknowledged genius. But his self-denial has had its reward. In extolling the water-colour and oil painting of Turner and Tintoret he became a painter in words no less renowned than they. In expounding Dante and Chaucer, Shakespeare and Spenser, he has given us prose poems, if I may be allowed the expression, which pedestal him in the “house of Fame” hardly lower than the highest of them. In his case, indeed, the saying is fulfilled, “whosoever will be great among you, let him be your

minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

He has, however, taken up his old work now and again at moments. To please a party of schoolgirls he wrote that splendid pæan of the kingdom of Heaven, "Awake, awake"; and its counterpart on the mystery of life, "Twist ye, twine ye." And later still, in old age, rhymes to fit the little tunes he has amused himself in making; some of them, like "Draw the curtains tight, Babette," as playful as Kate Greenaway's drawings; and another, "Trust thou thy Love," as tender and true as anything that has gone from his heart straight to the hearts of many a thousand lovers and readers of Ruskin throughout the wide world.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

POEMS.

JOHN RUSKIN.

I.—THE DESTRUCTION OF PHARAOH.

1832 (AGED 13).

I.

MOURN, Mizraim, mourn ! The weltering wave
Wails loudly o'er Egyptia's brave
Where lowly laid they sleep ;
The salt sea rusts the helmet's crest ;
The warrior takes his ocean-rest,
Full far below the deep :
—The deep, the deep, the dreary deep !
—Wail, wail, Egyptia ! mourn and weep !
For many a mighty legion fell
Before the God of Israël.

II.

Wake, Israel, wake the harp. The roar
Of ocean's wave on Mizraim's shore
Rolls now o'er many a crest.
Where, now, the iron chariot's sweep ?
Where Pharaoh's host ? Beneath the deep
His armies take their rest.
Shout, Israel ! Let the joyful cry
Pour forth the notes of victory
High let it swell across the sea,
For Jacob's weary tribes are free !

II.—THE AVALANCHE.

1835 (AGED 16).

The accident to which these lines allude occurred in the year 1822. Several guides, with Dr. Hamel, a Russian, and an Englishman, were ascending the Mont Blanc; when they had crossed the plain of ice above the Glacier of Bossons, an avalanche descended from the Calotte of Mont Blanc, which swept away several of the guides, two of whom were irrecoverably lost. The allusion in the last stanza is to a superstition very prevalent among the Swiss.

THEY went away at break of day,
And brave hearts were about them,
Who led them on, but at the grey
Of eve returned without them.

They're watched from yonder lowly spot
By many an anxious eye;
Hearts that forebode they know not what,
And fear, they know not why.

"Why left ye, lone upon the steep,
My child?" the widow said:—
"We cannot speak to those who sleep;
We dwell not with the dead."

"Why comes not with you from the hill
My husband?" said the bride:—
Alas! his limbs are cold and still
Upon the mountain-side.

His boy, in undefined fright,
Stood shivering at her knee;
"The wind is cold, the moon is white;
Where can my father be?"

That night, through mourning Chamouni
Shone many a midnight beam ;
And grieving voices wander by
The murmur of the stream.

They come not yet, they come not yet !
The snows are deep above them,—
Deep, very deep ; they cannot meet
The kiss of those who love them.

Ye avalanches, roar not loud
Upon the dreary hill :
Ye snows, spread light their mountain shroud ;
Ye tempests, peace !—be still !

For there are those who cannot weep,—
Who cannot smile,—who will not sleep,
Lest, through the midnight's lonely gloom,¹
The dead should rift their mountain-tomb,
With haggard look and fearful air,
To come and ask a sepulchre.

III.—THE WRECK.

1838.

ITS masts of might, its sails so free,
Had borne the scatheless keel
Through many a day of darkened sea,
And many a storm of steel ;
When all the winds were calm, it met
(With home-returning prone)
With the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore,

The crest of the conqueror
 On many a brow was bright ;
 The dew of many an exile's eye
 Had dimmed the dancing sight ;
 And for love and for victory,
 One welcome was in store,
 In the lull
 Of the waves
 On a low lee shore.

The voices of the night are mute
 Beneath the moon's eclipse ;
 The silence of the fitful flute
 Is on the dying lips.
 The silence of my lonely heart
 Is kept for evermore
 In the lull
 Of the waves
 On a low lee shore.

IV.—MONT BLANC REVISITED.

NYON, June 9th, 1845.

O MOUNT beloved, mine eyes again
 Behold the twilight's sanguine stain
 Along thy peaks expire.
 O Mount beloved, thy frontier waste
 I seek with a religious haste
 And reverent desire.

They meet me, 'midst thy shadows cold,
 Such thoughts as holy men of old
 Amid the desert found ;—
 Such gladness, as in Him they felt
 Who with them through the darkness dwelt,
 And compassed all around.

Ah ! happy, if His will were so,
To give me manna here for snow,
And by the torrent side
To lead me as He leads His flocks
Of wild deer through the lonely rocks
In peace, unterrified ;

Since from the things that trustful rest,
The partridge on her purple nest,
The marmot in his den,
God wins a worship more resigned,
A purer praise than He can find
Upon the lips of men.

Alas for man ! who hath no sense
Of gratefulness nor confidence,
But still regrets and raves,
Till all God's love can scarcely win
One soul from taking pride in sin,
And pleasure over graves.

Yet teach me, God, a milder thought,
Lest I, of all Thy blood has bought,
Least honourable be ;
And this that leads me to condemn
Be rather want of love for them,
Than jealousy for Thee.

V.—MONT BLANC.

1845.

HE who looks upward from the vale by night,
When the clouds vanish and the winds are
stayed,
For ever finds, in Heaven's serenest height,
A space that hath no stars—a mighty shade—
A vacant form, immovably displayed,

Steep in the unstable vault. The planets droop
Behind it ; the fleece-laden moonbeams fade ;
The midnight constellations, troop by troop,
Depart and leave it with the dawn alone ;
Uncomprehended yet, and hardly known
For finite, but by what it takes away
Of the east's purple deepening into day.
Still, for a time, it keeps its awful rest,
Cold as the prophet's pile on Carmel's crest :
Then falls the fire of God.—Far off or near,
Earth and the sea, wide worshipping, descry
That burning altar in the morning sky ;
And the strong pines their utmost ridges rear,
Moved like a host, in angel-guided fear
And sudden faith. So stands the Providence
Of God around us ; mystery of Love !
Obscure, unchanging, darkness and defence,—
Impenetrable and unmoved above
The valley of our watch ; but which shall be
The light of Heaven hereafter, when the strife
Of wandering stars, that rules this night of life,
Dies in the dawning of Eternity.

VI.—AWAKE, AWAKE.

ABOUT 1865.

AWAKE! awake! the stars are pale, the east is
russet gray!
They fade, behold! the phantoms fade, that kept the
gates of Day ;
Throw wide the burning valves, and let the golden
streets be free,
The morning watch is past—the watch of evening
shall not be.

Put off, put off your mail, ye kings, and beat your
brands to dust :

A surer grasp your hands must know, your hearts a
better trust ;

Nay, bend aback the lance's point, and break the
helmet bar,—

A noise is on the morning winds, but not the noise
of war !

Among the grassy mountain-paths the glittering
troops increase :

They come ! they come !—how fair their feet—they
come that publish peace !

Yea, Victory ! fair Victory ! our enemies' and ours,
And all the clouds are clasped in light, and all the
earth with flowers.

Ah ! still depressed and dim with dew, but yet a
little while,

And radiant with the deathless rose the wilderness
shall smile,

And every tender living thing shall feed by streams
of rest,

Nor lamb shall from the fold be lost, nor nursling
from the nest.

For aye, the time of wrath is past, and near the
time of rest,

And honour binds the brow of man, and faithfulness
his breast,—

Behold, the time of wrath is past, and righteousness
shall be,

And the Wolf is dead in Arcady, and the Dragon in
the Sea !

VII.—TRUST THOU THY LOVE.

1881.

TRUST thou thy Love: if she be proud, is she not
sweet?

Trust thou thy Love: if she be mute, is she not
pure?

Lay thou thy soul full in her hands, low at her
feet;—

Fail, Sun and Breath!—yet, for thy peace, *she*
shall endure.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

1819—1861.

THE literary reputation of Arthur Hugh Clough has been largely posthumous. The man himself was known to few outside the circumference of a small private circle, and beyond that circle the few books of verse which he published during his lifetime had little vogue or influence. It was the publication in the year 1863 of the small volume of "Poems," with a brief introductory memoir by Mr. Francis Turner Palgrave, which first roused the interest of a larger public, such interest being widened and intensified by the subsequent appearance of a complete collection of Clough's work in prose and verse, and of a fuller biographical record edited by the poet's wife. Clough's poetry never has been, and is never likely to be, popular in the ordinary sense of that word; but during the past quarter of a century it has possessed—and, in all probability, will long continue to possess—a peculiar and, in its way, unique fascination for an increasingly large class of men and women who feel that Clough speaks to and for them, and in uttering his own thought and emotion gives also expression to theirs. He was a true literary artist, but his art is mainly valuable not for its own sake but for its transparency as a medium of large self-revelation.

Arthur Hugh Clough was born in Liverpool on

the first day of the year 1819, being the second son of James Butler Clough, a scion of an old Welsh family, and of his wife, Anne, daughter of John Perfect, a Yorkshire banker. In 1823 the Clough family migrated to Charleston, U.S.A., and there the boy Arthur remained until the close of his ninth year, when he was sent to school at Chester, whence a few months later he was removed to Rugby, and came under the dominating influence of that great schoolmaster, Dr. Arnold. His Rugby career was in every way brilliant. He gained a scholarship open to all boys in the school under fourteen, and at fifteen he was at the head of the fifth form; but the rule of the school being that no boy could be admitted to the sixth form under the age of sixteen, he had to wait a year for the enjoyment and responsibility of the higher position. He became editor of, and a large contributor to, the *Rugby Magazine*; and his writing at this time, especially as it is seen in his letters, displays a certain maturity of thought and expression not unusual among boys who had come under the spell of Arnold's impressive personality. Arnold's system, though stimulating and elevating, was not without its possible dangers: his pupils ran a risk of being morally and intellectually trained "too fine"; but from this misfortune Clough was largely saved, partly by inherent healthfulness of nature and partly by his interest in the school games, in some of which he became a noteworthy proficient. He was a good runner; he was one of the first swimmers of his day; and in William Arnold's "Rules of Football" his name appears as that of the best goal-keeper on record. Gaining finally that scholastic

blue ribbon, the Balliol scholarship, he proceeded to Oxford, bearing with him the affection and goodwill of the whole school and the memory of Arnold's rarely spoken words of congratulation.

Never, perhaps, has the intellectual atmosphere of Oxford been charged with elements more powerful to excite and to stimulate than during Clough's years of residence at Balliol. He went up in 1837, and witnessed, with many stirrings of heart, the beginnings of the great Tractarian movement. Several of the leaders were Clough's more or less intimate acquaintances; one of them, W. G. Ward, was among his earliest and closest friends. To ignore the strength of the current in the midst of which he found himself was impossible to a nature at once so ardent and so sensitive as that of Clough: he must either passively yield or actively resist. It is impossible to indicate the precise extent to which Clough submitted to the subjugation of the new spirit; but that there was some yielding is evident from his own significant words, that for two years he had been "like a straw drawn up the draught of a chimney." There was, however, something in the man, which forbade that he should be long holden by a mode of thought really alien to him: he came to see that the way of his friends, though it might be good for them, was not his way; and the spiritual parting from his comrade Ward was celebrated in the beautiful and pathetic allegory, "*Qua Cursum Ventus*," which tells how the two ships "becalmed at eve, that lay with canvas drooping, side by side" were driven apart through the night, and when the morning came, were no longer of each other's company. There is bravery but no

bitterness in the parting: it is a word of "Hail" as truly as of "Farewell."

"To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold, where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last unite them there!"

Whatever ultimate gain came to Clough as the result of this intellectual ferment of his early Oxford years, it was certainly inimical to his success in the schools. The effects of his diversion from the paths of ordinary University work into by-ways of strange speculation, were the missing of the first class which had been confidently expected by his friends, and a subsequent failure to obtain a Balliol fellowship; but in 1842 he was elected a fellow of Oriel, and in the following year became a tutor of that college. The struggle he had gone through had not, however, left him where it found him. The battle had raged most fiercely round the citadel of Church authority, but this was not the only fortress of faith which, for Clough, had suffered in the fray. Gradually there grew within him the feeling that for an eager questioner such as he had become, Oxford had ceased to be a fitting environment, and in 1848 he resigned both his fellowship and his tutorship. A short period of leisure which followed this step was eminently productive. "*Ambarvalia*," his first volume

of verse, had been published during his residence in Oxford; it was now followed by "*The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*," written during a stay in Liverpool, and by "*Amours de Voyage*," the result of a visit to Rome at the memorable time "when from Janiculan heights thundered the cannon of France." Previous to this Roman experience he had been appointed Head of University Hall, London; but in 1852 he resigned this post, and migrated to America, settling down in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he devoted himself entirely to literary work. Here he probably would have remained, had not his situation at the time—for he was engaged to be married—tempted him to accept an examinership in the Education Office. His marriage took place in 1854; and in the next six years of quiet happiness but of arduous labour, three children were born to him. In 1860 his usual good health somewhat failed, but it was hoped that an extended holiday would completely restore him. This hope might have been fulfilled, had it not been that in the autumn of 1861 while sojourning among the Italian Lakes, he caught a chill which, by the time of his arrival in Florence, had developed into malarial fever. The fever passed, but the patient's strength was exhausted; paralysis supervened; and on November 13th, Arthur Hugh Clough bade farewell to earth, his body being interred in the lovely little Protestant cemetery on which the Tuscan hills look down—the God's acre which five months before had received the sacred dust of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

The special nature of the interest inspired by Clough's work in verse, has been briefly indicated in the opening sentences of this sketch. It is, for the

most part, the interest excited by a veraciously imaginative presentment of the attitude of an intrinsically noble and sincere mind, in the presence of the great problems of life and duty, as those problems are apprehended by one who to a bright and penetrating native intelligence has added the half-illuminating, half-dazzling results of large and liberal modern culture. It may be doubted whether any poet of our century has been at once so sensitive as was Clough, to the conflicting spiritual and intellectual influences of his time, and so unsparingly sincere in his record of his own spiritual and intellectual sensations. We have poets of faith and poets of doubt; and by a skilful arrangement of illustrative quotations, it would not be difficult to range Clough in either category, but so to range him would be to give currency to another of the already too numerous half-truths of criticism. He was really the poet of intellectual suspense, of dubitation, of questioning,—of that unstable equilibrium of the spirit with which all who think and who strive to be honest both to themselves and to their thought are so painfully familiar. His questioning of the self was as keen and searching as his questioning of the not-self: he suspected not merely the dogmas presented to him from without, but the very movements of his own mind which prompted him to welcome or to spurn the waiting guests, demanding from them testimonials of honesty such as are, perhaps, hardly procurable. Concerning the very characteristic lines in which he represents himself as

“Seeking in vain in all my store,
One feeling based on truth,”

Mr. R. H. Hutton has the penetratingly truthful

remark that Clough "wanted some guarantee for simplicity deeper than simplicity itself"; and this desire—as vain as that of "the moth for the star"—was undoubtedly a defect, but it was the defect of a very noble quality which gives his poetry the power at once to soothe and to illuminate. He would have none of the hypocrisies of faith, but he would also have none of the hypocrisies of scepticism. What a glow of white light is there in words like these:—

"Old things need not be therefore true,
O brother men, nor yet the new;
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,
And yet consider it again."

He can listen to the two voices of Easter Day with their conflicting messages of death and resurrection, and while neither fails to move him, neither can altogether vanquish him, for he feels he has that in him which responds to the wail as well as to the cry of jubilation. Were this, however, all, those who class Clough among the poets of scepticism, would not be far wrong. As a matter of fact he was saved from the abyss by a faith so sure and steadfast that it might be called his one certainty,—the fixed assurance of a Harmony in which the discords of phenomena find their resolution, in a divine future which lights up the shadows of the human present. After unavailing struggles to grasp the unattainable true, after manly refusal to be contented with the many counterfeits of present certainty, after all his questionings of the why and wherefore of existence he has always the one conclusion:—

"My child, we still must think, when we
That ampler life together see,
Some true result will yet appear
Of what we are together here."

It "will yet appear" because it exists now, and exists for the sake of revelation to those who are faithful through the darkness.

"The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven above ;
Do thou, as best thou may'st, thy duty do :
Amid the things allowed thee live and love ;
Some day thou shalt it view.

In an unavoidably brief survey of Clough's poetical demesne, there must needs be a measure of inadequacy; but an estimate howsoever brief, which left the impression of a subjective brooding poet, spinning cobwebs of metaphysics and spiritual psychology, would be not merely inadequate but misleading. Those who love Clough best because they know him best, are those who find the keenest delight in such a poem as "The Bothie of Tobernavulich," or in some of the tales in "Mari Magno," which are so simply objective, as free from haunting self-consciousness, as is anything in Homer or Chaucer or Crabbe,—poems which tell not of curious questionings, but of the glory of sunshine and fresh air, of the swirl of water in the brook, and the bloom of heather on the moor, of simple, unthinking human delight and love. Clough not only thought but lived; he was a full-blooded man as well as an eager questioner; and it may be that his questions and his answers come home to us the more intimately, because they had behind them not a mere brain, but a healthy and harmoniously developed human nature.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

POEMS.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

I.—THE HIGHER COURAGE.

COME back again, my olden heart!—
Ah, fickle spirit and untrue,
I bade the only guide depart
Whose faithfulness I surely knew :
I said, my heart is all too soft ;
He who would climb and soar aloft
Must needs keep ever at his side
The tonic of a wholesome pride.

Come back again, my olden heart!—
Alas, I called not then for thee ;
I called for Courage, and apart
From Pride if Courage could not be,
Then welcome, Pride ! and I shall find
In thee a power to lift the mind
This low and grovelling joy above—
Tis but the proud can truly love.

Come back again, my olden heart!—
With incrustations of the years
Uncased as yet,—as then thou wert,
Full-filled with shame and coward fears :
Wherewith amidst a jostling throng
Of deeds, that each and all were wrong,
The doubting soul, from day to day,
Uneasy paralytic lay.

Come back again, my olden heart !
I said, Perceptions contradict,
Convictions come, anon depart,
And but themselves as false convict.
Assumptions, hasty, crude and vain,
Full oft to use will Science deign ;
The corks the novice plies to-day
The swimmer soon shall cast away.

Come back again, my olden heart !
I said, Behold, I perish quite,
Unless to give me strength to start,
I make myself my rule of right :
It must be, if I act at all,
To save my shame I have at call
The plea of all men understood,—
Because I willed it, it is good.

Come back again, my olden heart !
I know not if in very deed
This means alone could aid impart
To serve my sickly spirit's need ;
But clear alike of wild self-will,
And fear that faltered, paltered still,
Remorseful thoughts of after days
A way espy betwixt the ways.

Come back again, old heart ! Ah me !
Methinks in those thy coward fears
There might, perchance, a courage be,
That fails in these the manlier years ;
Courage to let the courage sink,
Itself a coward base to think,
Rather than not for heavenly light
Wait on to show the truly right.

II.—QUI LABORAT, ORAT.

O ONLY Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see and feel,
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal !

Mine inmost soul, before thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine ;
Chastised each rebel self-encentered thought,
My will adoreth Thine

With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly mind
Speechless remain, or speechless e'en depart ;
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly kind
Can see Thee as Thou art ?—

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
In thought's abstractest forms to seem to see,
It dare not dare the dread communion hold
In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart prepare ;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it plies,
Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall part,
And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes
In recognition start.

But, as Thou willest, give or e'en forbear
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler prayer
Approach Thee morn and night.

III.—QUA CURSUM VENTUS.

AS ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried ;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side :

E'en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged ?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared !

To veer, how vain ! On, onward strain,
Brave barks ! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze ; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas !
At last, at last, unite them there !

IV.—THE QUESTIONING SPIRIT.

THE human spirits saw I on a day,
Sitting and looking each a different way ;
And hardly tasking, subtly questioning,
Another spirit went around the ring
To each and each : and as he ceased his say,
Each after each, I heard them singly sing,
Some querulously high, some softly, sadly low,
We know not—what avails to know ?
We know not—wherefore need we know ?
This answer gave they still unto his suing,
We know not, let us do as we are doing.
Dost thou not know that these things only seem ?—
I know not, let me dream my dream.
Are dust and ashes fit to make a treasure ?—
I know not, let me take my pleasure.
What shall avail the knowledge thou hast sought ?—
I know not, let me think my thought.
What is the end of strife ?—
I know not, let me live my life.
How many days or e'er thou mean'st to move ?—
I know not, let me love my love.
Were not things old once new ?—
I know not, let me do as others do.
And when the rest were over past,
I know not, I will do my duty, said the last.
Thy duty do ? rejoined the voice,
Ah, do it, do it, and rejoice ;
But shalt thou then, when all is done,
Enjoy a love, embrace a beauty
Like these, that may be seen and won
In life, whose course will then be run ;
Or wilt thou be where there is none ?
I know not, I will do my duty.

And taking up the word around, above, below,
Some querulously high, some softly, sadly low,
We know not, sang they all, nor ever need we know;
We know not, sang they, what avails to know?
Whereat the questioning spirit, some short space,
Though unabashed, stood quiet in his place.
But as the echoing chorus died away
And to their dreams the rest returned apace,
By the one spirit I saw him kneeling low,
And in a silvery whisper heard him say:
Truly, thou know'st not, and thou need'st not know;
Hope only, hope thou, and believe alway;
I also know not, and I need not know,
Only with questionings pass I to and fro,
Perplexing these that sleep, and in their folly
Imbreeding doubt and sceptic melancholy;
Till that, their dreams deserting, they with me
Come all to this true ignorance and thee.

V.—*BETHESDA*.

A SEQUEL.

I SAW again the spirits on a day,
Where on the earth in mournful case they lay;
Five porches were there, and a pool, and round,
Huddling in blankets, strewn upon the ground,
Tied-up and bandaged, weary, sore and spent,
The maimed and halt, diseased and impotent.
For a great angel came, 'twas said, and stirred
The pool at certain seasons, and the word
Was, with this people of the sick, that they
Who in the waters here their limbs should lay
Before the motion on the surface ceased
Should of their torment straightway be released.
So with shrunk bodies and with heads down-dropt,
Stretched on the steps, and at the pillars propt,

Watching by day and listening through the night,
They filled the place, a miserable sight.
And I beheld that on the stony floor
He too, that spoke of duty once before,
No otherwise than others here to-day,
Foredone and sick and sadly muttering lay.
'I know not, I will do—what is it I would say?
What was that word which once sufficed alone for all,
Which now I seek in vain, and never can recall?'
And then, as weary of in vain renewing
His question, thus his mournful thought pursuing,
'I know not, I must do as other men are doing.'
But what the waters of that pool might be,
Of Lethe were they, or Philosophy;
And whether he, long waiting, did attain
Deliverance from the burden of his pain
There with the rest; or whether, yet before,
Some more diviner stranger passed the door
With his small company into that sad place,
And breathing hope into the sick man's face,
Bade him take up his bed, and rise and go,
What the end were, and whether it were so,
Further than this I saw not, neither know.

VI.—DUTY.

DUTY—that's to say, complying
With whate'er's expected here;
On your unknown cousin's dying,
Straight be ready with the tear;
Upon etiquette relying,
Unto usage nought denying,
Lend your waist to be embraced,
Blush not even, never fear;
Claims of kith and kin connection,

Claims of manners honour still,
Ready money of affection
Pay, whoever drew the bill.
With the form conforming duly,
Senseless what it meaneth truly,
Go to church—the world require you,
To balls—the world require you too,
And marry—papa and mamma desire you,
And your sisters and schoolfellows do
Duty—'tis to take on trust
What things are good, and right, and just ;
And whether indeed they be or be not,
Try not, test not, feel not, see not :
'Tis walk and dance, sit down and rise
By leading, opening ne'er your eyes ;
Stunt sturdy limbs that Nature gave,
And be drawn in a Bath chair along to the grave.
'Tis the stern and prompt suppressing
As an obvious deadly sin,
All the questing and the guessing
Of the soul's own soul within :
'Tis the coward acquiescence
In a destiny's behest,
'To a shade by terror made,
Sacrificing, aye, the essence
Of all that's truest, noblest, best :
'Tis the blind non-recognition
Of goodness, truth, or beauty,
Save by precept and submission ;
Moral blank, and moral void,
Life at very birth destroyed.
Atrophy, exinanition !
Duty !
Yea, by duty's prime condition
Pure nonentity of duty !

VII.—THE LATEST DECALOGUE.

THOU shalt have one God only ; who
 Would be at the expense of two ?
 No graven images may be
 Worshipped, except the currency :
 Swear not at all ; for, for thy curse
 Thine enemy is none the worse :
 At church on Sunday to attend
 Will serve to keep the world thy friend :
 Honour thy parents ; that is, all
 From whom advancement may befall :
 Thou shalt not kill ; but need'st not strive
 Officiously to keep alive :
 Do not adultery commit ;
 Advantage rarely comes of it :
 Thou shalt not steal ; an empty feat,
 When it's so lucrative to cheat :
 Bear not false witness ; let the lie
 Have time on its own wings to fly :
 Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
 Approves all forms of competition.

VIII.—τὸ καλόν.

I HAVE seen higher, holier things than these,
 And therefore must to these refuse my heart,
 Yet am I panting for a little ease ;
 I'll take, and so depart.

Ah, hold ! the heart is prone to fall away,
 Her high and cherished visions to forget,
 And if thou takest, how wilt thou repay
 So vast, so dread a debt ?

How will the heart, which now thou trustest, then
Corrupt, yet in corruption mindful yet,
Turn with sharp stings upon itself! Again,
Bethink thee of the debt!

—Hast thou seen higher, holier things than these,
And therefore must to these thy heart refuse?
With the true best, alack, how ill agrees
That best that thou would'st choose!

The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven above;
Do thou, as best thou may'st, thy duty do:
Amid the things allowed thee live and love
Some day thou shalt it view.

IX.—SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE.

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

X.—EASTER DAY.

NAPLES, 1849.

I.

THROUGH the great sinful streets of Naples as I
past,

With fiercer heat than flamed above my head
My heart was hot within me ; till at last

My brain was lightened when my tongue had said—

Christ is not risen !

Christ is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low ;

Christ is not risen !

What though the stone were rolled away, and though
The grave found empty there ?—

If not there, then elsewhere ;

If not where Joseph laid Him first, why then

Where other men

Translaid Him after, in some humbler clay.

Long ere to-day

Corruption that sad perfect work hath done,
Which here she scarcely, lightly had begun :

The foul engendered worm

Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving form

Of our most Holy and Anointed One.

He is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low ;

Christ is not risen !

What if the women, ere the dawn was grey,
Saw one or more great angels, as they say
(Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither there, nor then,
Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at all,
Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten ;
Nor, save in thunderous terror, to blind Saul ;

Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,
He is not risen, indeed,—
Christ is not risen !

Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten
Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet again ?
What if at Emmaüs' inn, and by Capernaum's Lake,
Came One, the bread that brake—
Came One that spake as never mortal spake,
And with them ate, and drank, and stood, and walked
about ?

Ah ! 'some' did well to 'doubt !'
Ah ! the true Christ, while these things came to pass,
Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor lived, alas !
He was not risen, no—
He lay and mouldered low,
Christ was not risen !

As circulates in some great city crowd
A rumour changeful, vague, importunate, and loud,
From no determined centre, or of fact
Or authorship exact,
Which no man can deny
Nor verify ;
So spread the wondrous fame ;
He all the same
Lay senseless, mouldering, low :
He was not risen, no—
Christ was not risen !

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One, too !
This is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen !

Is He not risen, and shall we not rise ?

Oh, we unwise !

What did we dream, what wake we to discover ?

Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains, cover !

In darkness and great gloom

Come ere we thought it is *our* day of doom ;

From the cursed world, which is one tomb,

Christ is not risen !

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this is bliss :

There is no heaven but this ;

There is no hell,

Save earth, which serves the purpose doubly well,

Seeing it visits still

With equalest apportionment of ill

Both good and bad alike, and brings to one same dust

The unjust and the just

With Christ, who is not risen.

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls bereaved :

Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope

We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,

And most beliefless, that had most believed.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;

As of the unjust, also of the just—

Yea, of that Just One too !

It is the one sad Gospel that is true—

Christ is not risen !

Weep not beside the tomb,

Ye women, unto whom

He was great solace while ye tended Him ;

Ye who with napkin o'er the head

And folds of linen round each wounded limb

Laid out the Sacred Dead ;

And thou that bar'st Him in thy wondering womb ;

Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,
Bind up as best ye may your own sad bleeding heart :
Go to your homes, your living children tend,
Your earthly spouses love ;
Set your affections *not* on things above,
Which moth and rust corrupt, which quickliest come
to end :

Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if pray ye can,
For death ; since dead is He whom ye deemed more
than man,
Who is not risen : no—
But lies and moulders low—
Who is not risen !

Ye men of Galilee !
Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where Him ye
ne'er may see,
Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again ?
Ye ignorant and idle fishermen !
Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,
And catch not men, but fish ;
Whate'er things ye might wish,
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall meet with more.
Ye poor deluded youths, go home,
Mend the old nets ye left to roam,
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail :
It was indeed an 'idle tale'—
He was not risen !

And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,
Who shall believe *because* ye did not see—
Oh, be ye warned, be wise !
No more with pleading eyes,
And sobs of strong desire,
Unto the empty vacant void aspire,

Seeking another and impossible birth
That is not of your own, and only mother earth.
But if there is no other life for you,
Sit down and be content, since this must even do :

He is not risen !

One look, and then depart,
Ye humble and ye holy men of heart ;
And ye ! ye ministers and stewards of a Word
Which ye would preach, because another heard—
Ye worshippers of that ye do not know,
Take these things hence and go :—

He is not risen !

Here, on our Easter Day
We rise, we come, and lo ! we find Him not,
Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot :
Where they have laid Him there is none to say ;
No sound, nor in, nor out—no word
Of where to seek the dead or meet the living Lord.
There is no glistening of an angel's wings,
There is no voice of heavenly clear behest :
Let us go hence, and think upon these things
In silence, which is best.
Is He not risen ? No—
But lies and moulders low ?
Christ is not risen ?

II.

SO in the sinful street, abstracted and alone,
I with my secret self held communing of mine own.

So in the southern city spake the tongue
Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,
But in a later hour I sat and heard
Another voice that spake—another graver word.
Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been said,
Though He be dead, He is not dead.

In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed ;
Christ is yet risen.
Weep not beside His tomb,
Ye women unto whom
He was great comfort and yet greater grief ;
Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with Him to roam,
Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go hopeless to your
home ;
Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of their belief ;
Though He be dead, He is not dead,
Nor gone, though fled,
Not lost, though vanished ;
Though He return not, though
He lies and moulders low ;
In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed ;
Christ is yet risen.
Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,
Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly look around.
Whate'er befell,
Earth is not hell ;
Now, too, as when it first began,
Life is yet life, and man is man.
For all that breathe beneath the heaven's high cope,
Joy with grief mixes, with despondence hope.
Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief :
Or at least, faith unbelief.
Though dead, not dead ;
Not gone, though fled ;
Not lost, though vanished.
In the great gospel and true creed,
He is yet risen indeed ;
Christ is yet risen.

THE BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH

1848.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

ELSPIE AND PHILIP

(FROM BOOK VII.)

"ELSPIE, why should I speak it? you cannot believe it, and should not:

Why should I say that I love, which I all but said to another?

Yet should I dare, should I say, O Elspie, you only I love; you,

First and sole in my life that has been and surely that shall be;

Could—O, could you believe it, O Elspie, believe it and spurn not?

Is it—possible,—possible, Elspie?

Well,—she answered,

And she was silent some time, and blushed all over, and answered

Quietly, after her fashion, still knitting, Maybe, I think of it,

Though I don't know that I did: and she paused again; but it may be,

Yes,—I don't know, Mr. Philip,—but only it feels to me strangely,

Like to the high new bridge, they used to build at, below there,

Over the burn and glen on the road. You won't understand me.

But I keep saying in my mind—this long time slowly with trouble

I have been building myself, up, up, and toilfully
raising,
Just like as if the bridge were to do it itself without
masons,
Painfully getting myself upraised one stone on
another,
All one side I mean ; and now I see on the other
Just such another fabric uprising, better and stronger,
Close to me, coming to join me : and then I some-
times fancy,—
Sometimes I find myself dreaming at nights about
arches and bridges,—
Sometimes I dream of a great invisible hand coming
down, and
Dropping the great key-stone in the middle : there
in my dreaming,
There I felt the great key-stone coming in, and
through it
Feel the other part—all the other stones of the arch-
way,
Joined into mine with a strange happy sense of com-
pleteness. But, dear me,
This is confusion and nonsense. I mix all the things
I can think of.
And you won't understand, Mr. Philip.

But while she was speaking,
So it happened, a moment she paused from her work,
and pondering,
Laid her hand on her lap : Philip took it : she did
not resist :
So he retained her fingers, the knitting being stopped.
But emotion
Came all over her more and yet more from his hand,
from her heart, and

Most from the sweet idea and image her brain was
renewing.

So he retained her hand, and, his tears down-dropping
on it,

Trembling a long time, kissed it at last. And she
ended.

And as she ended, uprose he : saying, What have I
heard ? Oh,

What have I done, that such words should be said
to me ? Oh, I see it,

See the great key-stone coming down from the
heaven of heavens ;

And he fell at her feet, and buried his face in her
apron.

But as under the moon and stars they went to the
cottage,

Elspie sighed and said, Be patient, dear Mr. Philip,
Do not do anything hasty. It is all so soon, so
sudden.

Do not say anything yet to any one.

Elspie, he answered,
Does not my friend go on Friday ? I then shall see
nothing of you.

Do not I go myself on Monday ?

But oh, he said, Elspie !
Do as I bid you, my child : do not go on calling
me Mr. ;

Might I not just as well be calling you Miss Elspie ?
Call me, this heavenly night for once, for the first
time, Philip.

Philip, she said, and laughed, and said she could
not say it ;

Philip, she said ; he turned, and kissed the sweet
lips as they said it.

But on the morrow Elspie kept out of the way of
Philip :
And at the evening seat, when he took her hand by
the alders,
Drew it back, saying, almost peevishly,
No, Mr. Philip,
I was quite right, last night ; it is too soon, too sudden.
What I told you before was foolish perhaps, was hasty.
When I think it over, I am shocked and terrified at it.
Not that at all I unsay it ; that is, I know I said it,
And when I said it, felt it. But oh, we must wait,
Mr. Philip !
We mustn't pull ourselves at the great key-stone of
the centre :
Some one else up above must hold it, fit it, and fix it ;
If we try ourselves, we shall only damage the archway,
Damage all our own work that we wrought, our
painful upbuilding.



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